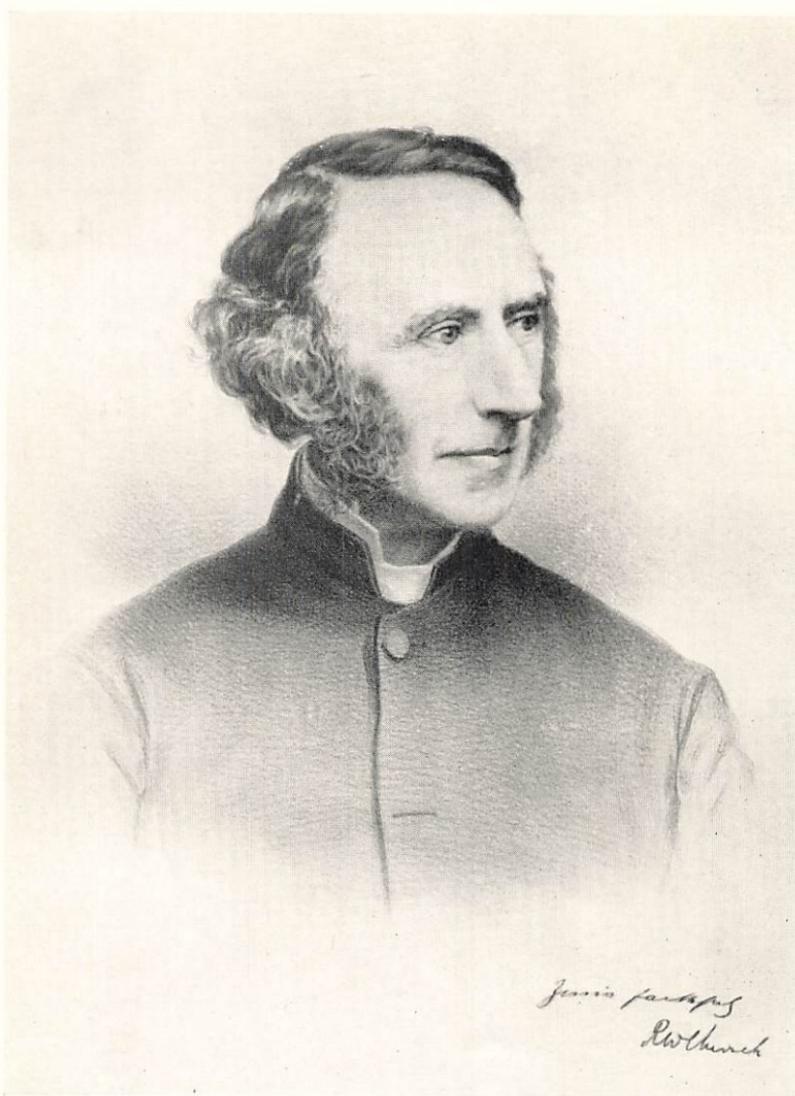


DEAN CHURCH



*from an engraving
at Whatley*

DEAN CHURCH, c. 1874
(*from an engraving at Whatley*)

DEAN CHURCH

"THE ANGLICAN RESPONSE TO

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B. A. SMITH
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With six drawings by Lynton Lamb

LONDON

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

NEW YORK TORONTO

1958

Oxford University Press, Amen House, London E.C.4

GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI KUALA LUMPUR
CAPE TOWN IBADAN NAIROBI ACCRA

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
WESTERN PRINTING SERVICES LIMITED, BRISTOL

TO
A. E. BAKER
whose friendship, counsel, and inspiration
have meant much

Preface

A STUDY of the mind and writings of Dean Church, which this volume purports to be, is bound up with his biography. The two have therefore been run together in the following pages. What comes out as a result is the crucial nature of Church's contribution to the ecclesiastical history of England between 1845 and 1890.

It was a period when the Establishment and all that it stands for might well have foundered. Students of nineteenth-century theology in this country are familiar with the parts played by Maurice and Mozley, Stanley and Jowett, Pusey and Liddon. But, though these names hold the stage and count for so much in the post-Tractarian era, they leave the vital transition unexplained. Anyone will appreciate the gap who puts side by side Sir Geoffrey Faber's *Oxford Apostles* and the late Dr. G. L. Prestige's *Life of Charles Gore*. The one shows us the High Anglican edifice first illumined then burnt out by the psychological conflagration which drove Newman to Rome. The other presents us with the new genius of the *Lux Mundi* school rising, apparently like a phoenix out of the ashes, forty-five years afterwards. It is what the subtle impact of Dean Church had been able to effect in the interval which establishes for him a unique place amongst the nursing fathers of modern Anglicanism.

A number of good judges have always appreciated this. Readers of Hensley Henson, for instance, can gather something of his intellectual veneration for Dean Church. The late Dr. Clement C. J. Webb, in a pregnant footnote to his *Study of Religious Thought in England from 1850*, refers to Church as 'a man eminent for the distinction of his scholarship, the saintliness of his character, and the wisdom of his judgement among the prominent ecclesiastics of his time, the influence of whom upon many contemporaries better known to the public than himself entitles him to a more important place in the history of religious thought in this country than his comparatively small output of theological and religious literature might suggest'.

PREFACE

Perhaps, indeed, if that lucid historian in the same field, Canon Ollard, had lived to write the biography which he promised, the general reader would by now have been familiar with the facts which gave Church his peculiar hold upon many hearts.

In default of such a volume the present writer can only point out that it seems time to add at least something to a theme which, since the appearance of the *Life and Letters of Dean Church* by Mary Church in 1894, has received no attention from any author except D. C. Lathbury; and his admirable survey of fifty years ago, in Messrs. Mowbray's 'Leaders of the Church' series, did not profess to break new ground.* Fresh light, however, is thrown upon the Dean's influence in the second half of the century by a collection of his letters, hitherto unprinted but available amongst the Gladstone Papers in the Manuscript Room, by courtesy of the authorities, at the British Museum. This and other material used here, though it has not lessened the need to draw heavily upon Mary Church's record for biographical purposes, does augment considerably the total picture of the man. Moreover, it helps to clarify our estimate of the rôle which he filled in relation to an age when the Gladstonian experiment was setting the pace in readjustment for almost every institution of the national life.

It needed Gladstone's ideals as well as those of the Oxford Movement to bring Church's judicious powers into full play. But his being Dean of St. Paul's was quite ancillary to his main vocation. As a result of Newman's abdication, there devolved upon him the task of effecting certain reconciliations of a more vital and delicate nature than some persons in authority were quite able to appreciate. And it was not without a personal ordeal that he became for the nineteenth century the living focus of that religious tradition which had been bequeathed to England by Hooker, Andrewes and Butler in previous centuries. So considered, Dean Church is a significant figure. He reflects for us something as essential to the flowering of the true Anglican spirit as that spirit is itself essential to the survival, in a scientific age, of a Christianity at once catholic, critical, and humane.

September 1957

B.A.S.

* Algernon Cecil devoted a chapter to Church in his *Six Oxford Thinkers* (1909).

Acknowledgements

FOR permission to quote numerous autograph letters of Dean Church I am indebted to the goodness of his grandsons, Archbishop Edward Francis Paget, General Sir Bernard Paget, and Colonel Humphrey Paget. Letters from W. E. Gladstone to the Dean have been graciously made available by Mr. C. A. Gladstone of Hawarden. Quotations from Pusey's correspondence and from the diaries of Liddon are printed by courtesy of the Principal of Pusey House, Oxford, and the Warden of Liddon House in London.

Mrs. Maisie Sheed, who in a delightful little note records how her father was devoted to Dean Church and also expresses her own veneration, has allowed me to quote passages from Wilfrid Ward's *Life of Cardinal Newman*. To Messrs. John Murray I owe thanks for permission to make extracts from C. A. E. Moberly's *Dulce Domum*, D. C. Lathbury's *Correspondence on Church and Religion of Gladstone*, and G. W. E. Russell's *Malcolm MacColl*. For an extract from Lady Strachey's *Later Letters of Edward Lear* I have received the consent of Messrs. Ernest Benn. Other publishers have been equally kind; and, for slight but interesting borrowings from books to which reference is made in the notes, my thanks are due to Messrs. Macmillan & Co.; Messrs. Methuen & Co.; Messrs. Faber & Faber; Messrs. Chapman & Hall; Messrs. A. R. Mowbray & Co.; and S.P.C.K. The engraving used as frontispiece is reproduced by courtesy of the Revd. A. F. Dobbie-Bateman. If by oversight I have trespassed upon anyone's copyright I sincerely apologize.

In the course of collecting material I have received very civil and efficient assistance from the British Museum staff, both in the Manuscripts Department and at Colindale; from the University Library at Durham and the Minster Library at York; from the reference departments of the Public Libraries at Bath, Bristol, Leeds, and—above all—York. Members of the Paget family have been unfailingly patient and helpful, and Mrs. Luke Paget has supplied specially useful clues. She and Miss A. E. Church of Wells have on various occasions answered my

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

tiresome questions with good humour and promptitude. Lieut.-Colonel C. J. B. Church has done the same and generously put at my disposal new evidence from his own careful researches. For other valuable assistance I am indebted to Mr. Frank Moberly, to Dr. G. H. Bushnell, to Miss Agatha Ramm, to Miss Mary Lapham, to Mr. Cecil Farthing, to Mr. G. L. Taylor, to Mr. John Summerson, to Lieut.-Colonel H. and Mrs. Boardman, to Signora D. Rossoni, to the British Consul at Florence, and to Canon Hugh Farrie of the English Chaplaincy, Lisbon.

But, of all gratitude the most inadequate will remain that to the author's wife who for several years believed and hoped and endured.

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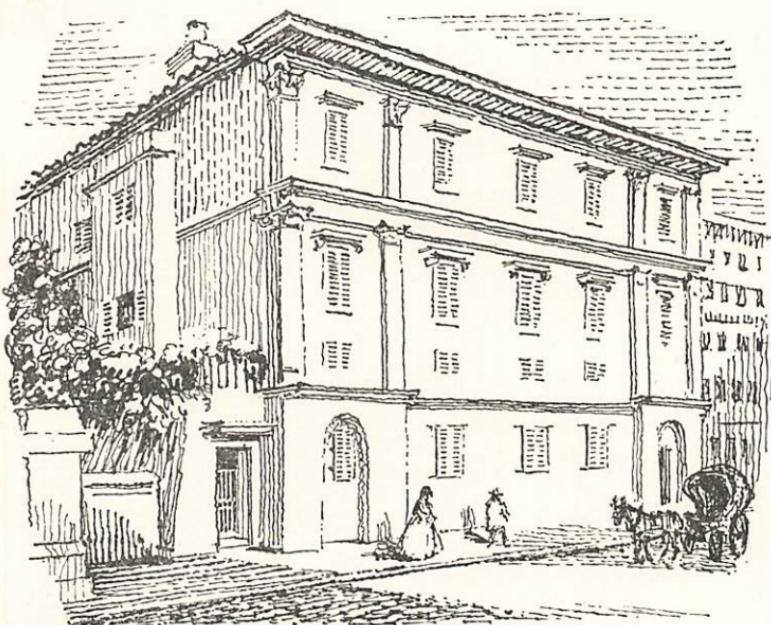
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PART ONE



Casa Annalena, Florence

CHAPTER ONE

Family Matters



I. MEDITERRANEAN CHILDHOOD

RICHARD WILLIAM CHURCH came into this world in spite of a technical error on the part of the Royal Navy. His parents, after their marriage in London, were returning to Portugal on board the packet-brig *Marlborough*, Captain John Bull, from Falmouth, in 1814, when she was hailed on 12 March by the English man-of-war *Primrose*, of eighteen guns, Captain Phillott. It was the time of the Napoleonic Wars, and the *Marlborough* herself went armed for fear of French or American privateers. When sighted, each crew felt suspicious about the cut of the other's colours; and the two vessels, having come to action at 7.55 p.m., exchanged fire briskly for about twenty minutes before the mistake was discovered. As a result of this gallant engagement the *Primrose* lost one of her crew killed, the master and three others mortally wounded, and twelve seamen hurt. On board the *Marlborough*, though two passengers lost their lives and seven or eight others, including the master, were injured, Mr. and Mrs. Church escaped unharmed to reach home in Lisbon. Their first child was born on 25 April (St. Mark's Day) the following year. The register of the English Chaplaincy at Lisbon records that the future Dean of St. Paul's was baptized, under the name Richard William, on 16 May 1815.¹

An additional note in the register states that his father, John Dearman Church, after being a Quaker, embraced the Anglican faith and was baptized on 11 July 1811 before his marriage to Miss Bromley Caroline Metzener. She was of an Anglo-German family, long resident in Lisbon; but Mr. Church had come out there in 1810 from Cork where his father, Matthew Church, head of a firm of wine merchants, was finding business

DEAN CHURCH

on the decline.* Ann Dearman, whom Matthew Church married, came from Braithwaite in Yorkshire, and the pair of them were professing members of the Society of Friends. It was their younger son, Richard, who first broke the religious tradition of the family by running away from school to join the army—and subsequently the Church of England. His father's name was scored out on the membership board of the Cork meeting-house because, rather than disown the lad, he purchased him a commission as ensign of the 13th Foot. So starting at the age of sixteen, this youth later achieved celebrity as General Sir Richard Church, the hero of the Greek struggle for independence.† With a genius for leadership amongst the peoples of the South, this small but intrepid Irishman led a military life of an unusually romantic kind. He was a good linguist, a great reader, a devout Christian, and a lover of desperate adventures. Lord Cochrane's secretary, who knew the General during the worst hardships of his Greek campaigning, recalled seeing him in his tent on the Munychium with nothing but his Bible and sword on a table. In less outlandish fields of service his abilities might have brought him much greater reward, but (as his nephew noted in an obituary marked by pious admiration) 'he clung to the Mediterranean'.²

Providence also decreed that young Richard should be brought up, during his most impressionable years, in the Mediterranean region. Consequently he imbibed something of that large spirit which Englishmen felt towards the whole European scene in the years immediately following the defeat of Napoleon. Only the first year of his life was passed at Lisbon. 'In 1816, his father retired from business, and with the intention of settling

* The Churches were amongst the earliest of Quakers in Leicestershire where they can be traced to have lived as a farming family before they moved to Ireland in the Cromwellian period.

† His forty years in Greece began in 1827. But before that he served under Sir Ralph Abercromby in the expedition which drove the French out of Egypt in 1801; he distinguished himself at Maida; and, both in the Italian peninsula and among the Ionian islands, raised and commanded levies in various irregular exploits as part of the campaign to harass the periphery of Napoleon's Empire. In 1814, at the Congress of Vienna, he prepared a report for Castlereagh on the strategic value of the Ionian islands. He was made British military resident with Count Nugent's Austrian army, and held the same position with General Bianchi's forces in the short campaign against Murat, in the final stages of the war. (Cf. *Dict. Nat. Biog.*)

FAMILY MATTERS

in England, bought a small property, Ashwick Grove, in Somersetshire. But threatenings of ill-health rendered an English life undesirable, and in 1818 he went to Italy, finally settling with his family in Florence. Here a house was bought, the Casa Annalena, in the Via Romana, adjoining the Boboli Gardens; and this became their home for the next eight years.' One of the first concerns of John Church when he reached Italy was to visit his brother who was then conducting operations in the region of Apulia. With the permission of the British War Office, the General (as he was henceforth called) had accepted a special mission to suppress brigandage in the provinces of Bari and Otranto on behalf of the King of Naples. The treachery and outrages of the secret societies in these parts had produced a reign of terror which required settling with personal courage and a strong hand. The General succeeded in rounding up the chieftains concerned, and his brother arrived just after the execution of one of them at Francavilla in February 1818. Mrs. Church, in her new home at Florence, received from her husband an account of the almost royal progress which Richard was making through the pacified territory. Mr. Church was twenty days with the General as he rode, 'accompanied by two hundred cavalry and about twenty gentlemen of the country', on a three-hundred-miles tour. Besides being officially entertained in the towns, they received a festive welcome from villagers who, headed by bishops and the local clergy, came out with music and addresses, flags and garlands, to welcome the victorious cavalcade.

Two years later, in May 1820, John Church again went to visit the General, whose headquarters were at Lecce, and this time took with him his little son Richard, aged five. All was then peaceful in Apulia, but tales which the boy heard about his uncle's earlier sternness in putting the bandits to death left on him the impression that he had seen blackened heads stuck upon poles by the roadside or fastened in iron cages over the gates of cities. Actually, they had been taken down and burned by order the previous year. But though operations were ended, the General was unable to get from his royal employer, a typical Bourbon, any remuneration for his services; and it was John Church who came generously to his brother's assistance to pay off the troops. 'Richard', he wrote, 'is promised a post of

DEAN CHURCH

great honour and eminence, so now his fortune is made'; and (a little later) 'he has not yet got his reward, but before long, *entre nous*, we shall have a Marquess in the family with a fine estate!'³ What really happened was that, no sooner had the General taken up a further thankless task in Sicily, than insurrection broke out against King Ferdinand in Naples. John Church and young Richard, on their way back from Lecce to Florence, were actually at Naples in July 1820 when the revolution began. They took refuge, with other foreign residents, on board a ship in the harbour. One of the recollections which the boy always retained was of 'being lifted up on deck by the sailors, to watch the firing from the forts, and the fighting in the streets and on the Chiaja'.⁴

Richard shared his Florentine childhood with two brothers —Bromley, two years younger than himself, and Charles, younger still. The three children, we are told, had the central place in what was a very happy home. Mr. and Mrs. Church were 'people of much quiet reality of religious feeling and open-hearted affection; possessing a good deal of cultivation and taste, and taking their part among the English residents in the social life of Florence, besides seeing something of the Italian life of the period'. The eldest boy, in particular, came to know the streets and buildings of Florence with a familiarity to which memory added even more affection later. And a special feature which is mentioned amongst the family pleasures was 'each summer's *villettiatura* at Leghorn or in the hill country about the Baths of Lucca'.⁵

Now Leghorn was specially important. There, in 1826 at the age of eleven, Richard was sent to a preparatory school set up for English boys. Bromley, the brother who later went to sea, attended with him; and the two of them were often down at the harbour studying the build and rigging of the various ships. Born in the year of Waterloo and living in a household which had reason to know something of the Napoleonic Wars, the elder lad afterwards remembered how he used to steep himself in Southey's *Life of Nelson*. But it was more than associations of that kind which Richard Church, when he got to England, owed to Leghorn. By going there the Churches became permanently connected, through friendship and intermarriage, with three other families—the Crokats, the Bennetts, and the

FAMILY MATTERS

Moberlys. It will be necessary to digress a little at this point to get a clear background of what became a minor but interesting quadruple alliance, all very relevant to the life of Dean Church.

The Crokats, originally from Leith, were also a mercantile family who opened up trading houses in the Mediterranean theatre of war at Palermo, Leghorn and Genoa. Thomas Crokat, a Presbyterian (whose soldier brother, Captain William Crokat, was one of Napoleon's personal attendants at St. Helena), likewise resembled the Churches by adopting the Anglican faith and becoming a regular communicant. Before his marriage to a Scottish beauty he had made friends with some of the Sicilian nobility, and in 1817 brought his wife and young family to reside rather affluently in a suite at the largest palace in Leghorn. After Mrs. Crokat's death in 1825 the widower and his family moved to a villa just out of the town. His eldest girl, Mary Anne Crokat, who achieved a delightful but rather premature introduction to fine society, has left on record the sort of life they lived and the people they met. She was only two years older than Richard Church but entered with almost poetical zest into the elegancies of Italian life as well as the natural amenities of the Italian scene. Her sensuous delight in sunlit gardens and stately rooms was matched by an eagerness to attend balls and get some naval officer or young count for a partner. Her good looks and charm made her, before the age of twenty, a notable belle during the seasons she spent at Naples and Genoa. Yet, with all this, she had serious religious principles and resolved that it should be her vocation to marry an English clergyman. From her journal and memoirs we learn the affection she quickly developed, as a motherless girl, for Mrs. Bennett, the wife of Henry Bennett who was the English chaplain at Leghorn. Mrs. Bennett, whose maiden name was Emily Moberly, had two sisters and eight brothers—all born in Russia. Several of the brothers 'went into the mercantile line', but Mary Anne pricked up her ears to learn that one of them, George Moberly, was in the clerical category as a brilliant young graduate at Oxford. Him, indeed, she eventually met and married. Meanwhile, concerning her youthful time in Italy, she notes that:

Mr. and Mrs. Church came several times to Leghorn from Florence, with their three sons, Richard, Bromley and Charles. Lady Church

DEAN CHURCH

came with them; she was in great anxiety about her husband, General Church, then fighting for Greece in the Greek War of Independence. My brothers had a room with a carpenter's bench and tools, and Richard and Bromley Church often came and made ships and boats with them, and I had to hem the sails.⁶

Mrs. Bennett, with a young family of her own, mothered the six Crokat children; and it is evident that, for full measure, the three young Churches also added to the romp. One outcome of this in future years was that the three Bennett girls got their husbands from that nursery at Leghorn and became Mrs. Charles Crokat, Mrs. Charles Church, and Mrs. Richard Church. But that was after Henry Bennett had given up Continental chaplaincies and settled in England as a Somersetshire parson at Sparkford.⁷

II. AT BRISTOL AND BATH

So far as Richard's family was concerned, the delightful years in Italy came to a grievous and unexpected end. John Dearman Church died suddenly in Florence at the age of forty-six in January 1828. The boys were hastily sent for but arrived too late to see their father alive. The General was engrossed with his campaign against the Turks in Akarnania. The melancholy business of settling her husband's affairs was completed somehow; and Mrs. Church, having broken up the home where they had all lived so happily, finally left Italy for England with her three children in May. Her mother, Mrs. Metzener, accompanied them and they settled in Bath at 3 Lansdown Crescent.*

It had been Mr. Church's intention to send Richard to Winchester. But the slender health of the boy himself, as well as the reduced income of his widowed mother, precluded his going there. Instead, he went to a school at Exeter, but had to be withdrawn after only one term because of the 'sudden disappearance of the master' for reasons unspecified. A new start was made at Redland, on the outskirts of Bristol, where he stayed four and a half years and, under the headmastership of Dr. Swete, received a solid if uninspired grounding. Many years afterwards, the Dean spoke of what he owed to such

* The Bath Directory of 1833 says 3 Lansdown Place East.

FAMILY MATTERS

authors as Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Burke, Walter Scott, Defoe, and Goldsmith in picking up the art of plain expression. ‘When I was a boy’, he said, ‘and at college, I did a great deal of translating from English into Latin, which is a great discipline in itself.’ A less congenial recollection was the task allotted to the boys of writing out sermon notes and finding Bible texts in defence of such doctrines as Justification by Faith, Sanctification, Total Depravity, and Final Perseverance. For at Redland they made it their business to inculcate Evangelical principles by the hot-house method. The older boys, under an eloquent clergyman named Armstrong, attended what was called a ‘Reformation Society’ and were taught to declaim against the various errors and enormities of Rome. Young Church seems to have been torn between admiration for the powers of Mr. Armstrong and a certain native scepticism as to ‘whether we really could be so cocksure about the absolute truth of the Evangelical formulae’.⁸

The secondhand bookshops of Bristol were a special attraction to a boy who, though on good terms with the masters and the other boys, was of the frail, undersized, studious type and early became (says his biographer) a discriminating collector ‘with an eye to editions’. But the most memorable event during his time at Redland was the outbreak of the Bristol Riots in October 1831, when a demonstration was staged against the Recorder for opposing the Reform Bill. Street skirmishing, the breaking and burning of the jails, and the firing of the Bishop’s Palace, culminated in scenes of drunkenness and degradation which left a lifelong impression upon Charles Kingsley. He was also a schoolboy elsewhere in Bristol at the time and stole out to see what happened. ‘That sight’, he declared subsequently, ‘made me a Radical.’ The effect on Richard Church was merely one of youthful excitement which left his Tory outlook untouched:*

We were going to church on Sunday, when we heard shots fired in the direction of Bristol. We knew that Bristol was excited about Sir Charles Wetherell, who had had to escape from the mob over the roofs of houses; but we knew nothing more. In the evening I went out of the schoolroom into the playground, and there was half

* This comparison comes from S. C. Carpenter: *Church and People, 1789-1889*, p. 59.

DEAN CHURCH

the horizon lighted up with vast conflagrations. Of course the excitement was tremendous. No news had come out, and next morning the news was that the mob were in possession. . . . It was a question whether any of us had a pistol among his contraband treasures. I cannot remember how we passed the night, but I think we must have gone to bed. However, we heard in the course of the day that the yeomanry and some of the cavalry had come back, and cleared the streets, and slain some of the mob. There were after-tragedies—the court martial, and Colonel Brereton's suicide, and the hanging of the rioters. But I don't think it made much impression on us, except to make us think Reform and Radicalism very abominable things.⁹

An old family hope was fulfilled when Richard was admitted at Wadham College, Oxford, on 28 June 1832. But he did not start residence till the following year. In 1833 domestic affairs, by a strange turn of events, also picked up some of the threads of happier days. Leghorn decided that year to transfer itself to Bath: at least, from the Churches' angle, it would seem so. First, the worthy Thomas Crokat, leaving his motherless family comfortably accommodated with their uncle in Genoa, paid a visit to England for reasons of his own. As a result of his negotiations, it was shortly announced that Mrs. Church and he were to marry.* His daughter, Mary Anne, receiving the news with surprise, came over with her sisters in order to be at the ceremony. She took a month to enjoy France on the way and arrived, characteristically, in time to attend the Ascot race meeting. They all went to live at Mrs. Church's house in Bath, but neither the climate nor the English mode of life were to the taste of Miss Crokat, at first. She states in her reminiscences:

I was taken to a hunt ball, and I thought it very shabby and paltry after the balls in the great houses in Italy; the gentlemen had not the polish of Italians, and danced so shockingly. I enjoyed the Long Vacation when Richard Church was at home. He was a great comfort to me, for, having been so much abroad, Italy was as much to him as to me. He was very kind and brotherly, and told me a great deal about Oxford, to which he had just gone as an undergraduate, and taught me to appreciate the *Christian Year*. Richard Church wanted me to see a pretty English seaside place, so we both

* The wedding took place by licence at Walcot Church, Bath, 11 June 1833.

FAMILY MATTERS

went on a visit to Lynmouth with Miss Harwood and her brother Philip, whom I had known well as a little boy in Leghorn.¹⁰

It was dark when they arrived. But the next morning, springing out of bed and expecting a prospect to remind her of her Mediterranean seas and skies, the poor girl burst into tears at the sight of dull, grey waters and a north Devon fog. As years went on she got used to England better than Richard did on that score.

But the Italian invasion of Bath was not at an end. The Bennetts also returned and took a house at Sydney Place. So the four families, whose children had grown up together for a time at Leghorn, could now join forces socially with the wedding of widow and widower to talk about. And the seeds of another romance were sown within the same circle when George Moberly came over on a visit from Balliol to stay with his sister Emily and his brother-in-law Henry. Mary Anne Crokat crossed the town and spent the day at Sydney Place, as she has recorded in her journal:

Sept. 27, 1833; Lansdown Crescent—

... Went to see Mrs. Bennett, who detained me to dinner. Mr. Bennett was there, and *her* brother, the Rev. George Moberly, whom I had so long wished to see, and now became acquainted with for the first time. Liked him very much. Papa and Richard came for me in the evening.

A few days later, on 29 September, it was her twenty-first birthday. When she came down to breakfast her 'Mamma' (as she now called Mrs. Crokat) presented her with Ossian's *Poems*; and from the children she received Baxter's *Saint's Rest* and Taylor's *Holy Living*. One further volume completed the moral furniture which a step-mother felt suitable for a girl leaving the gaieties and hoping one day to be a clergyman's wife. The entry in Mary Anne's journal says: 'On the table I found a splendid edition of Bowdler's *Family Shakespeare*; this was an offering from Richard, who was ashamed to present it, so I was obliged to guess who it was from.' It sounds as though the title may not have been of the donor's choosing. But if it was, in the light of what he had to say later in favour of the unexpurgated classics, his choice at this time suggests that a few months away from Redland had not obliterated its straitening influence.¹¹

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For the young lady herself the year 1833 closed, as she noted on Christmas Eve, with a pleasurable acceptance of the new family relationship created by her father's remarriage. She had rather dreaded both it and England. The following December, after a courtship mingled with a delightful round of London and country visits, she and George Moberly were married and ready to settle in Oxford, early in 1835, for what remained there of his academic career. For Richard Church, too, fresh and interesting developments were in store from 1833. Whether he went the next summer with the lovers to join the family party at Sparkford Rectory or not, his interest in that parish was due to be deepened by the attraction of Helen Bennett. Moreover, ladies apart, he struck up with Moberly an intellectual friendship of great importance. 'He', wrote the Dean, looking back many years afterwards, 'was the person who opened my dull eyes, and put a high reality of character and purpose before them, and made me feel the difference between narrowness and manliness, between the mere shell and letter of religion and its living truth.'¹²

But that is to anticipate. At the first meeting of the two men, at Bath in 1833, as the lady observed (who became wife to one of them and step-sister to the other)—'Richard came to fetch me in the evening, and was most horribly shy at having to speak to an Oxford don; we have often laughed over it since.' Young Church, it should be observed, was the junior by twelve years; and as an undergraduate of eighteen felt himself very much a nobody in the academic world.¹³

CHAPTER TWO

Oxford and Newman



I. ACADEMICAL LIFE

THE first two-thirds of Richard Church's life at Oxford covered the years from 1833 to 1845. To try to describe his university career during that period without constant reference to the Oxford Movement, which was then dominating the place, is somewhat like trying to present *Hamlet* without the Prince. But the academic picture is itself worth attention, and by treating it as a preliminary we shall be free next to consider Church's association with Newman without so much risk of blurring the issues.

When the young man from Bristol went into residence at Wadham, in the Easter Term, 1833, he had no expectation of becoming a don. He could boast none of the advantages, for instance, of Arthur Stanley who, as the darling of Arnold at Rugby and a person of family, entered Balliol that same year on an almost lordly footing.* Mark Pattison, even before he came up by coach from Yorkshire, had an ambitious father to supervise his start and progress in college. Richard Church had to depend upon a widowed mother whose friends recommended Wadham largely because tutors there were known to be of Evangelical principles. Coming up as he did with the 'narrow sympathies and commonplace teaching of Redland' as his foundation, he must have seemed a somewhat weak competitor amongst the Eton and Winchester men. He knew no one at Oxford and, to begin with, had only a letter of introduction to Richard Michell, Tutor of Lincoln, who asked him to breakfast and showed what kindness he could to the obscure

* Stanley, we are told, while still an undergraduate, was consulted by Lord Melbourne the Prime Minister about Dr. Hampden's appointment as Regius Professor of Divinity.

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freshman. At Wadham, unable to mix with the brilliant seniors, Church took his own line to the extent of avoiding the pronounced Evangelicals of the place. ‘My friends’, he says, ‘were mostly men of no special colour, quiet, well-behaved, sensible, not likely to make a noise in the University or the world.’ Writing home he had nothing to report to his mother except being ‘proctorized once, for not having my gown on’. He was by no means miserable but it all sounds very tame.¹

Friendship, however, coupled with his natural endowments, soon transformed everything for Church. George Moberly, his new kinsman by marriage, held at that time a high reputation as a Fellow and Tutor of Balliol. He at once interested himself in Richard and put him into touch at the University with men of a sort to stretch his mind and bring him out. But, though the benefit of this connexion did not cease when Moberly left Oxford in 1835 to go as Headmaster to Winchester, it could not then be a term-time intimacy. The second piece of good fortune which came Church’s way was the quite spontaneous friendliness of Charles Marriott, a Scholar of Balliol who became Fellow of Oriel in 1833. He called on the undergraduate at Wadham in his first term, and (wrote Church) ‘I thought it an immense honour to be noticed by such a swell. I don’t suppose I saw very much of him, but he never lost sight of me. His kindness and affection grew and never faltered to the day of his death. He was the earliest friend to whose undeniable superiority I could look up.’²

What the sterling character of Marriott did in attracting the younger man towards High Church circles can be gathered from the tribute paid to him by the Dean when he wrote *The Oxford Movement*. He serves, along with Isaac Williams in that volume, as a sample of the old-fashioned university cleric of the period. Indeed, there is something reminiscent of the *Essays of Elia* about the tenderness with which Church portrays the eccentric but saintly Marriott. The peep we get shows him in the Oriel Common Room discussing with the Provost the value of leases and the management of college property, or standing up in the Union—of which Church was elected a member in February 1834—to make some hopeless speech. Yet, however hopeless, he was sure to receive from that sometimes rowdy

assembly a hearing in which kindly amusement was mingled with respect.

His ways and talk were such as to call forth not unfrequent mirth among those who most revered him. He would meet you and look you in the face without speaking a word. He was not without humour; but his jokes, carried off by a little laugh of his own, were apt to be recondite in their meaning and allusions. With his great power of sympathy, he did not easily divine other men's lighter or subtler moods, and odd and sometimes distressing mistakes were the consequence. His health was weak, and a chronic tenderness of throat and chest made him take precautions which sometimes seemed whimsical; and his well-known figure in a black cloak, with a black veil over his college cap, and a black comforter round his neck, which at one time in Oxford acquired his name, sometimes startled little boys and sleepy college porters when he came on them suddenly at night. . . .

He had a large, and what must have been often a burdensome correspondence. With pupils or friends he was always ready for some extra bit of reading. To strangers he was always ready to show attention and hospitality, though Marriott's parties were as quaint as himself. His breakfast parties in his own room were things to have seen—a crowd of undergraduates, finding their way with difficulty amid lanes and piles of books, amid a scarcity of chairs and room, and the host, perfectly unconscious of anything grotesque, sitting silent during the whole of the meal, but perfectly happy, at the head of the table. But there was no claimant on his purse or his interest who was too strange for his sympathy—raw freshmen, bores of every kind, broken-down tradesmen, old women, distressed foreigners, converted Jews, all the odd and helpless wanderers from beaten ways, were to be heard of at Marriott's rooms; and all, more or less, had a share of his time and thoughts, and perhaps counsel.³

Academically, Church did better than he had reason to expect. His health would not stand strain and he went home ill after taking his 'Little-go' in October 1832. But, as an addition to that elementary examination, his tutor had given him a trial in Greek prose which indicated a fitness to read for honours. He got help from Moberly, and in his final term Michell took him for private tutoring without charge. He and another out-college man went to him at Lincoln, and Michell cross-questioned them—'sometimes when he was shaving'—in

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Rhetoric and Ethics. In November 1836 Church went into the Schools without much confidence. Mary Anne Moberly noted in her journal on the 13th—‘Poor Richard is now undergoing his examination. His tutor, Mr. Griffiths, says he has never felt so much interested in any young man for many years.’ In the event, the examiners ‘thanked him for his papers’ and he had the gratification of landing a first. This success opened up the prospect of staying on at Oxford if he could get a Fellowship. It had to be an open one in his case, because of his birth abroad, and that meant either Oriel or Balliol where competition was keen. He decided to try for Oriel and had eighteen months in which to prepare. During that time he took pupils; and, by dining at high tables and going into Common Rooms, extended his friendship with people such as Lake at Balliol and others at Exeter. But he concentrated most, no doubt, upon Oriel where he had access through Marriott to the great Mr. Newman himself.

As the time drew near Church went through the traditional procedure of calling on the Provost of Oriel to ask leave to stand for election, and wrote a Latin letter to each of the Fellows stating his case. The examination itself took place in Easter week and lasted four days. Church’s description of what happened when he underwent the ordeal in April 1838 has an archaic interest about it. The candidates, each bringing with him a specified volume of the *Spectator*, assembled in the Hall to receive their papers and instructions from the Dean. On the first day they were set to translate a longish piece from the book into Latin and write an English essay. Papers in Greek and Latin, together with some philosophical questions, occupied the following days. The candidates started at ten in the morning and were told they might work on ‘till it got too dark to see, but . . . should not have candles’. James Mozley, it was said, when he tried for his Fellowship, stayed on and, as it grew dark, lay down and wrote by firelight an essay of about ten lines—but lines ‘such as no other man in Oxford could have written’.*

* At Balliol, according to Dean Lake, W. G. Ward ‘rather startled his competitors by stretching himself on the floor of the Master’s dining-room and going to sleep for an hour before he began his essay’. (*Memorials of William Charles Lake*, 28–29.)

The purpose of the examination was not so much to test the amount of each candidate's knowledge as his capacity and quality of knowing.

The last two days [so Church recalled] were varied by excursions to the 'Tower' for *vivâ voce*, which was made a good deal of. One of the Fellows called you out of the hall, and led you up a winding cork-screw staircase, at the top of which a door opened, and let you into the presence of the assembled Fellows seated round a table with pen and paper before them. You were placed before a desk, on which were Latin and Greek texts. You were given one of these, and told to look over a given passage for two minutes or one minute, or to read it off at sight and translate it. This you did in perfect silence round you—the only thing heard, besides your own voice, being the scratching of a dozen pens at the table. You bungled through it without remark, and another book was given you, and then another—the last being perhaps some unintelligible passage from Plutarch about the moon or the like. When you had done the Provost thanked you, and another Junior Fellow took charge of you, conversing pleasantly with you in your stupified condition, and escorted you to the Common room, where you remained for the rest of the time. The next and last day *vivâ voce* again, in the same way, not quite so bad, because you were more accustomed to it, but still very horrible; and then you went home. If you were elected, the Provost's servant called on you the next day, with the Provost's compliments, and requested your presence at the scene of your late torture, the Tower, and you went and received the congratulations of the Provost and Fellows; and later you were admitted probationer Fellow in chapel. You were introduced after service by one of the Junior Fellows, who led you to the Provost's stall, and the Provost, as if much surprised, asked you, 'Domine, quid petis?' to which you answered, 'Peto beneficium hujusce collegii in annum', which the Provost graciously conceded to you, and you were conducted to your place.⁴

Church's success in being elected was justified by his subsequent reputation as an accomplished scholar. Both that and his attractive personality received testimony from Mark Pattison, one of the disappointed candidates. Amidst all the sourness of his *Memoirs*, Pattison declared that he 'always looked upon Church as the type of the Oriel Fellow', and also mentioned him as being among the very small number of true friends he ever had at Oxford. In the first year of his Fellowship it fell to Church to become Tutor as well, but he accepted

the vacancy with reluctance and never liked the work. It was a characteristic of his to prefer learning of all sorts to teaching of any sort. We find him in March 1839 attending lectures on anatomy and reporting an entire absence of squeamishness amongst sights which upset some of the others. But, he reflected, he should not like a doctor's business when it came to operating on a living person. His mother was residing at Burnham when he wrote from Oriel on 5 May to tell her how lovely Oxford looked with its gardens in the spring; but he wished he could be amongst the Beeches instead of having to do the duties of a tutorial life:

I am tied all the morning, and can only see how fine it is out of doors through the windows: and my chief objects of contemplation are the impudent faces, gay waistcoats, sparkling breast-pins, tattered gowns and unread books of my 'young friends', the undergraduates—dear creatures, who come in steaming and perfuming my room with every possible combination of tobacco smoke, scents and pomatum.⁵

From scenes which suggest a foretaste of the *Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green* the new Tutor was able to escape in August for a few weeks' holiday in the Netherlands. He set off with Frederick Faber of University and joined company with Arthur Stanley on board the Ostend boat. The three of them then travelled together by canal, 'in a sort of oblong chaise drawn by two horses', as far as Bruges. There, according to Stanley's account, they were able to see the Procession of the Host with the Bishop of Bruges under a gilded canopy, as well as to look at such places as the Belfry, the Palais de Justice and the Hospital of St. Jean, and to take a moonlight walk along the ramparts. They went on to Ghent, travelling by *char à banc*, or second-class carriage, and put up at the Hôtel de Flandres. They had some leg-pulling during their stay because (as Stanley told his people at home) the landlady 'was most delightful, speaking English, almost embracing her guests at every turn, and taking the most affectionate farewell of me, and giving me a bundle of rusks, for which, she said, I must pay when I came back next year. Faber and Church thought it would be necessary to warn you of the approaching union!' With that, they parted from Stanley, who was on his way to

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Bonn, and spent the time ‘seeing Trèves and Cologne, and wandering about the valley of the Moselle’.⁶

Almost every don, according to the old tradition, became a clergyman. But the atmosphere of the University in Newman’s time, and of his own college in particular, is enough to assure us that Church’s ordination by the Bishop of Oxford, at Christmas 1839, was anything but a routine step in his career. The service lasted from ten till two and there were some sixty candidates, but we have no record of Church’s feelings about it all. He wrote afterwards to his mother, simply to say, ‘I shall read for the first time in St. Mary’s on Sunday in the afternoon at four o’clock. It is trying, as it is rather a large church, and difficult to read in. But it is the custom for the Fellows of Oriel to read there for the first time.’ Being in deacon’s orders did not apparently involve him in parochial work except incidentally. Some years later, when he met Watson and Mildmay of Merton at the Easter Day celebration in Athens, the sight of their faces ‘brought back St. Mary’s early service and St. Peter’s-in-the-East’. But, as Church was never a priest during the whole of his time at Oxford, he could only be of limited assistance to any of the parish clergy. His main concern was to push on with reading, and for that purpose he often stayed in residence very pleasantly during the Long Vacation. He worked hard, running down perhaps only on a Saturday to visit his mother, and allowing himself to spend a boating holiday off the Isle of Wight with Charles Marriott and James Anthony Froude in the summer of 1840. At this period he was laying the foundation of those historical studies which became his lifelong concern. He drew inspiration, along with most other people in the University, from the remarkable lectures delivered by Arnold in 1841 after his appointment as Professor of Modern History. Church could not help liking ‘his manly and open way, and the great reality which he throws about such things as descriptions of country, military laws and operations, and such-like low concerns’. At Oriel they favoured the Bishop Butler tradition of the eighteenth century and avoided concessions to the concrete and picturesque. Stanley, building his authorship on the Arnaldine foundation, always represented the Romantics much more than Church in this respect.⁷

But, fortunately, it is possible to get a few colourful glimpses

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into Church's life as a resident graduate even in the years when he came most under the strict Tractarian influence. After resigning his Tutorship he became Treasurer of his college, and there fell to him the business of dealing with tenants as well as the masons, carpenters, and painters who maintained the Oriel properties. In October 1842 he was wrestling with the horrors of audit:

For four mortal days we have been at it, living on accounts (and sandwiches) from ten till near six, with nothing but ledgers and account books, big, middling and little, old and new, red, green and white, meeting one's eye—nothing to amuse one but corn rents and money rents, consols and reduced annuities, sums in long addition and long division, practice and interest—all of us shut up in a queer old tower, turned into men of business for the nonce, writing and cyphering away like mad, all in our gowns, and all our work a good part in Latin.⁸

A few days later there ensues a vivid picture of the bewilderment caused by the introduction of income tax that year by Sir Robert Peel—whom Church expressed a desire to see roasted along with the returns:

At one o'clock I wait on the Provost. We get our books and papers, and the blank form to fill up. Something is to be put down. The Provost starts a difficulty; I hold my tongue while he hunts it down. When he has caught it and settled it, he catches sight of a second; so to despatch this more deliberately, he leaves the books and draws his chair to the fire, puts his feet on the fender, and begins disputing most vigorously the pros and cons of the new puzzle—all with himself, just like a dog running round after his own tail. At last he grabs it, gives it a hard bite, and then perhaps returns to the table again, much gratified, but not much the wiser for the exercise, whilst poor I have been standing patiently by while this amusement has been going on. And so things go on, with much talk and little done, till four o'clock.⁹

Hawkins, who was in his pig-headed way quite a character, must have entertained mixed feelings about this younger colleague. At a time of mounting tension in the religious life of the University they were on opposite sides, but Church was not an easy man to quarrel with. He felt the irony of finding himself, as a principal adherent of the Tractarian Movement, ranged against seniors who included not only the Provost of

Oriel, but also his old superior, Dr. Symons, the Warden of Wadham, a staunch Evangelical who in 1844 succeeded Dr. Wynter as Vice-Chancellor. That was the year when Church was elected to serve as Junior Proctor. 'I certainly did not expect,' he wrote, 'when I used at Wadham to stand before the old Warden in immense awe of his bigness and deep voice, that I should be presiding over his election and sitting in dignity next to him.' In his capacity as a Proctor he attended upon the Vice-Chancellor, the Heads of Houses, and the Preacher on the occasion of a university sermon. They assembled (he says) at St. Mary's in Adam de Brome's Chapel and sat 'in their robes, more or less grand, according to the day', till the beadle came and they formed up in procession to enter the church. Less formal and more critical were the times when he and his companion in office, Guillemard, had to be present at meetings of the Hebdomadal Board whose members were, almost to a man, the avowed enemies of the Movement. He saw, however, the funny side of being looked upon 'with a mixture of horror and contempt, as a semi-papist and a young man'. Other proctorial duties also called forth a sense of amusement which in Church was never far to seek. 'I fairly lost my gravity', he says at having to face the university police for the first time when they reported for patrol. He describes the scene very boyishly to his mother:

One goes at nine at night to a vaulted room underground, as dreary looking and grim as a melodrama would require—a table with pen and ink, feeble lamp, and sundry cutlasses disposed round the walls. One sits down in great dignity at a table, and then the police are marched in by batches of six. They enter like robbers or conspirators in a play, all belted and great-coated, looking fierce. 'All quiet last night?' passes your lips. All their heads begin to bob, as if they were hung on springs, and without any stopping for three or four minutes, all their voices commence repeating, 'All quiet, sir', as fast as they can; and when they have lost their breath, *exeunt* all bobbing.¹⁰

This vivacious way of entering into all that was lively in the day-to-day affairs of the University never quite deserted Church even when the sense of impending storm made the Oxford atmosphere tense and gloomy for those caught up, as he was, into the religious issues. Though his whole outlook at this time

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was deeply coloured by the Tractarian crisis, yet he managed to keep his studies and friendships from being entirely overwhelmed by it. The year 1845 left marks upon him, as upon a number of others in that place, of a sort to last for life. Yet in the very thick of it he could always withdraw to someone or something independently interesting. There was, for instance, Manuel Johnson, of Magdalen Hall, a member of the Tractarian group, who had been elected Radcliffe Observer in 1839. Church, as can be seen from a letter which he wrote home on 1 August 1845, found solace in resorting to Johnson at a time when his mother felt very anxious about him:

I wish I could persuade you that Oxford is a very enjoyable place in the Long Vacation. One is very quiet with one other Fellow, one cat, one dog, and one jackdaw with clipped wings, for one's companions in College; and when I am in the sulks, I can go to a friend who lives just out of the town, and all but in the country, at the Observatory, and smoke a cigar with him, and look at Jupiter and Saturn through his telescopes.¹¹

II. THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

The ideal training, perhaps, for a youth of parts is to distinguish himself in the University, then go abroad at once to some convenient place where there is an insurrection in progress. Behind the barricades, as nowhere else, he will learn what it means to belong to a fiery cause and go through the realities of self-sacrifice amidst sordid conditions. Book-learning ripened into understanding by comradeship-in-arms has made men into poets.

Richard Church was not a poet, and when he saw France on the eve of a revolution, it was not as a fighting man but in the safe capacity of a traveller. Before this, however, while still in England, he did become vitally involved in a quite unusual bid for liberty and glory. He belonged to that favoured batch of Oxford men who for a number of years had the excitement of a high though bloodless revolution in their midst. By matriculating in 1832 he arrived at the right time to be both a witness and a participant in a struggle which lasted twelve years. In his volume describing what happened we get the spirit and setting of it aptly conveyed:

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The stage on which what is called the Oxford movement ran through its course had a special character of its own, unlike the circumstances in which other religious efforts had done their work. The scene of Jansenism had been a great capital, a brilliant society, the precincts of a court, the cells of a convent, the studies and libraries of the doctors of the Sorbonne, the council chambers of the Vatican. The scene of Methodism had been English villages and country towns, the moors of Cornwall and the collieries of Bristol, at length London fashionable chapels. The scene of this new movement was as like as it could be in our modern world to a Greek *πόλις*, or an Italian self-centred city of the Middle Ages. Oxford stood by itself in its meadows by the rivers, having its relations with all England, but, like its sister at Cambridge, living a life of its own, unlike that of any other spot in England, with its privileged powers, and exemptions from the general law, with its special mode of government and police, its usages and tastes and traditions, and even costume, which the rest of England looked at from the outside, much interested but much puzzled, or knew only by transient visits. And Oxford was as proud and jealous of its own ways as Athens or Florence; and like them it had its quaint fashions of polity; its democratic Convocation and its oligarchy; its social ranks; its discipline, severe in theory and usually lax in fact; its self-governed bodies and corporations within itself; its faculties and colleges, like the guilds and 'arts' of Florence; its internal rivalries and discords; its 'sets' and factions. Like these, too, it professed a special recognition of the supremacy of religion. . . . These conditions affected the character of the movement, and of the conflicts which it caused. . . . Oxford was a place where every one knew his neighbour, and measured him, and was more or less friendly or repellent; where the customs of life brought men together every day and all day, in converse or discussion; and where every fresh statement or every new step taken furnished endless material for speculation or debate, in common rooms or in the afternoon walk. And for this reason, too, feelings were apt to be more keen and intense and personal than in the larger scenes of life. . . . And these feelings passed from individuals into parties; the small factions of a limited area. Men struck blows and loved and hated in those days in Oxford as they hardly did on the wider stage of London politics or general religious controversy.¹²

Looking back upon this after fifty years, Jowett and others affected to treat it as a storm in a teacup. That is explained by lack of sympathy; and Church said, upon hearing of it, 'I quite understand his disliking and despising the Movement as

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reactionary, unphilosophical, superstitious and petty.' Against the background of large political issues, the development of national life in the age of the Reform Bill, and the spread of railways, the concerns of the Tractarians may perhaps be dismissed by students of general history as a domestic side-show. The great world, before the middle of the century, had taken the first steps in philosophy and economics towards relegating parsons and university officials to a minor rôle. Yet the Oxford Movement remains worthy of attention just because spiritual phenomena present the supreme stuff of history. Nelson's 'band of brothers' is of living interest even to those who care little for the complications of sea-power. The friendships of the Lake Poets, though their revolutionary theories may now appear so much froth, are a perennial human concern because of the *Lyrical Ballads*. And it is a fact of history that, because of the Tractarian fellowship, creative forces were released into English life. Religion left yet another impress upon society, not least in art and letters. But the great thing was to have been in the thick of what happened. The Tractarian struggle as it surged through the Common Rooms and quadrangles, not without rowdy scenes and tense public assemblies, had in it something to lighten men's eyes and quicken the pulse. A noble ideal was blazoned forth, and they had amongst them a leader. Those were the royal days of John Henry Newman. With him, and others, the future Dean of St. Paul's got a singular experience of friendship in that best of all ways of tasting it—as a comrade fighting for a beloved cause in time of crisis.¹³

The way in which Church lived through that stirring time fitted him to be, both then and later, a significant commentator. Something like a connected story of it, from his angle, is possible despite all the gaps. It seems to fit naturally into three phases.

III. GROWTH OF NEWMANISM, 1833-40

The Oxford Movement is reckoned to have begun when John Keble preached his famous Assize Sermon in July 1833. Newman and Hurrell Froude, who had been holidaying in the Mediterranean, were back. Full of resolution to rouse the University to a sense of religious challenge, the three men

opened hostilities with deliberate intent. They felt a burning resentment against the Whig government whose attitude to ecclesiastical questions plainly showed that the nation had no idea what the Church of Christ really was. Its sacred nature, as a divinely-founded Society, simply did not occur to politicians who at that moment were proposing to reduce the number of Protestant bishoprics in Ireland. To Keble and his friends it meant an act of profane spoliation. His sermon on ‘national apostasy’ was the sounding of a priestly trumpet to inaugurate a resistance movement amongst the clergy against Liberalism and all its works. There followed upon this the issue and distribution of the Tracts—forty or more of them in little over a year. The master hand of Newman wrote the first. Addressing his ordained brethren, he reminded them of the Apostolical authority of their office. He ended by calling upon them, in face of what the Establishment had become, with a direct challenge—‘choose your side’. Other writers, soon to include the great Dr. Pusey, were enlisted and the Tracts succeeded beyond all hope. Snatched up in colleges when hot from the press, or delivered at country rectories by the Tractarians themselves riding out on horseback during the vacation, these theological proclamations were a call to arms. The stagnant world of Erastian assumptions was being thoroughly stirred.

Richard Church, a freshman at Wadham, had no part with the Movement at this early stage. Yet, though surrounded by Evangelical influences, he read and admired Keble’s *Christian Year*. The company of Marriott and Moberly gradually drew him away from the religious party which dominated his own college. But he did not suddenly become a High Churchman. Two years elapse before we find any evidence that his association with Marriott was bearing significant fruit. In a letter to his mother, on 6 July 1835, Church wrote:

I dined the other day at Oriel, and was introduced to Newman, and to Keble, the author of the *Christian Year*; both of them men to whom I have looked up with great interest and veneration.

No doubt they found him modest enough: a listening young man of twenty. Keble was forty-three and Newman thirty-four. After this first meeting he seems to have slipped back to his

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books again without any sign of becoming one of the disciples. But the leaven was at work.¹⁴

Church had already been impressed by a sermon of Newman's, entitled 'The World's Benefactors', in which the preacher told himself and his hearers 'we must unlearn our admiration of the powerful and distinguished' and turn to 'the graces of personal holiness' manifested in God's elect. A new sort of admiration was indeed being set before the congregation of the University Church by the Vicar himself. His character of restrained holiness, and his peculiar insight into the human heart, combined with the sermons to make him a legend amongst Oxford men for generations to come. 'Who', wrote Matthew Arnold, 'could resist the charm of that spiritual apparition, gliding in the dim afternoon light of the aisles of St. Mary's, rising into the pulpit, and then in the most entrancing of voices breaking the silence with words and thoughts which were a religious music—subtle, sweet, mournful. Happy the man who in that susceptible season of youth hears such voices. They are a possession to him for ever.'¹⁵

Church's comment upon Newman's sermons was less romantic. What struck him was not the circumstances of their delivery but the substance of what the man had to say. His message had a noble severity which rebuked all that was cold and mean in religion. But Church made no immediate surrender to the preacher's spell. 'I did not for some time', he says, 'much care to go to St. Mary's to the four o'clock service, because I thought it rather a fashion of a set who talked a kind of religious philosophy. . . . It was said that the dinner hour at Wadham was set to make it inconvenient.'¹⁶ He became, however, a regular attender from the time he took his degree. A sermon of Newman's, preached in February 1836 (on the necessity of 'making ventures' as a pledge of our faith in Christ), came, according to Mary Church, as a direct call to her father for a more searching reality in his religious life. 'It inspired his first great practical effort at self-denial. It seemed to him, as he looked back, to have been in some sort the turning point of his life.'¹⁷

Something more than pious exhortation went along with Newman's preaching. His own wide reading—whether of history or poetry or novels—acted as a stimulus to the younger

men in his wake. The whole Tractarian circle took an interest in the spirit and philosophy of recent and current literature. 'I was', recalled Church, 'very early a Coleridgian (in poetry) and a Wordsworthian, and I learnt my liking for Coleridge and Wordsworth from those very typical Movement men, Charles Marriott, Moberly . . . and F. Faber.' His notebooks, during the year and a half after Church had taken his degree, indicate what seems to be the Oriel influence. 'It is a great wish of mine', he wrote, 'to be properly acquainted with Butler, to lay the foundations of my own mind amid his works—to have him ever facing me and imbuing me with his spirit.' He noted, besides, 'something in Maurice, and in his master Coleridge, which wakens thought in me more than any other writings almost; with all their imputed mysticism they seem to me to say plain things as often as most people'. Furthermore, to give religious urgency and sharpness to this reading, there were the theological lectures delivered by Newman at St. Mary's on weekday afternoons in Advent and after Easter. His teaching on Catholicism, as he then thought Anglicans should understand it, appeared later in book-form entitled the *Prophetic Office of the Church*. Behind such teaching lay the stubborn conviction which brought Newman as a Tutor of Oriel into conflict with Hawkins, the Provost. Five years before the Movement came into the open Hurrell Froude and Robert Wilberforce, brother Tutors with Newman, had supported him in the view that they had a pastoral as well as an academic relationship to the undergraduates of the college. The Provost, who was hostile to the spread of High Church notions, insisted that a Tutor, though a clergyman, should confine himself to the minds of his charges and not seek to influence their souls. Till the Tractarian régime finally collapsed Hawkins had a grim (and for Oriel very unfortunate) war to wage with his Tutors. Moreover, for several years he had the chagrin of knowing that the chief writer of the Tracts, which he and other Heads of Houses detested, was holding weekly tea-parties for out-college men in his rooms. Promising young scholars like Church from Wadham were having neo-Catholicism instilled into them at Oriel under the Provost's very nose. In 1838, Church came to reside in the college as a Fellow. He found himself thenceforth under the direct and intimate sway of a profound and subtle

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religious mind. When he faced the prospect of being made deacon the following year, what better form of ordination retreat could have been devised for Church than simply to live, as he did, in daily converse with John Henry Newman?¹⁸

Things in the University at that time were moving towards a state of religious enthusiasm which expressed itself outright in hero-worship. Young men from this college and that were beginning to feel, if not to voice, the sentiment of the impetuous W. G. Ward of Balliol, 'Credo in Newmannum'. In view of Church's position, both then and later, the nature of this spell deserves to be considered.

It almost seems that there was something electrical in the academic atmosphere during those twenty years which ended so dramatically with the cloudburst of 1845.* The peculiar nature of the old University, with its warren of some twenty-eight colleges and halls, has already been described. In that strangely English setting it somehow came about that the irreligious romanticism of Lord Byron was being succeeded and denied, in the student mind, by a counter-romanticism associated with the modest poetry and example of John Keble. Instead of seducing ladies and going into Continental exile, the heroic temperament felt a contrary urge to outdo Keble by embracing celibacy and founding some rural monastery near home. To understand the outlook of scholars who went through that phase we must remember that, though they were individuals, they were less than normally self-contained. They overflowed into each other's lives as moral beings. The friendship which sprang up between Newman and Church was one of a whole series of similar friendships contracted at that time, and perhaps it had more reticence about it than some. But, in any case, it needs to be seen against the communal situation from which it arose. Before these two men (or other pairs like them) ever met, a strange blend of human relationships had taken control of Oxford on a wide scale. It cannot be explained, yet evidently it requires more than the Vicar of St. Mary's, however magnetic, to account for the forces at work. The truth seems to be that the personality of Newman was first the collecting-point, and then the point of distribution, for a whole

* Cf. letter from Thomas Arnold, 17 August 1840, warning Lake against 'noxious elements' in the air of Oxford. (*Memorials of William Charles Lake*, 162.)

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body of thought which went by the name of Puseyism. Other minds and hearts had begun to ferment before Newman arrived to draw things to a head. He absorbed and he distributed. In between those processes came the man himself, indispensable to the Movement and of supreme importance. Both as an interpreter and as an originator of religious ideas Newman stands as a sort of Augustine of the nineteenth century. But he can only be properly appreciated in his special context. Destiny seemed to have set him at the centre of a complex psychological whirl. No one became his friend without being caught up by forces which were more than personal.

The initiating figure in the whole process was undoubtedly Richard Hurrell Froude—lordly, high-tempered, scathing—who stumbled upon the buried ideal of Catholic holiness in the English Church and yielded himself forthwith to be its bond-slave for life and its revolutionary zealot. ‘Some wild, solemn poetry, marked by deep feeling and direct expression,’ wrote Church, ‘is scattered throughout his letters, kindled always by things and thoughts of the highest significance, and breaking forth with force and fire.’ It was this ‘fearless and powerful spirit, keen and quick to see inferences and intolerant of compromises’ who despised the scholar-gentleman conception of clerical life and threw in his lot with Keble to form a group which might save the Church by recalling it to its original idea and purity. Richard Church likened Froude to Pascal for his brilliant, sharp-cutting intellect which passes with ease through the coverings and disguises which veil realities from men. Both had mathematical powers of unusual originality and clearness; both had the same imaginative faculty; both had the same keen interest in practical problems of science; both felt and followed the attraction of deeper and more awful interests. Both had the same love of beauty; both suppressed it. . . . Both had the greatest contempt for fashionable and hollow ‘shadows of religion’. Both had the same definite, unflinching judgement. Both used the same clear and direct language. Both had a certain grim delight in the irony with which they pursued their opponents.¹⁹

Now Froude died of consumption in 1836; and Church, who was then an undergraduate, never met him. When Newman read the above passages in manuscript in 1885 he told the author, ‘I think you have succeeded wonderfully in your

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account of R. H. Froude, and marvel how without knowing him you could be so correct.' Of course, Lord Blachford and others had supplied information. But, beyond that, Church was probably able to get an uncanny insight into Froude's mind simply by knowing Newman's. Such were the sensibilities of the Movement that, amongst the intimates, it was possible for something of one personality to pass across from friend to friend with mercurial ease. Men were caught up by the spirit of other men whom they had never seen.²⁰

The tangible links are well known. Froude, having done three years' reading at Hursley Rectory, first imbibed from the old-fashioned and saintly Keble the depth and discipline of High Church practice. He returned to become Fellow of Oriel in 1826. There (to quote Church again) he 'found Newman just in that maturing state of religious opinion in which a powerful mind like Froude's would be likely to act decisively. Each acted on the other. . . . Newman gave shape, foundation, consistency, elevation to the Anglican theology, when he accepted it, which Froude had learned from Keble.' There may have been, as Sir Geoffrey Faber suggests, something pathological in the mysterious blend of religious and personal intercourse which, over the course of a few years, characterized the relations between Newman and Hurrell Froude. The psychology of ascetic love between two men with celibate ideals is a specially difficult matter when one is undoubtedly in the category of genius, and the other not far below. But it is their achievement which counts. Together they set going at Oriel a conflagration such as no other college has seen before or since. As if to add fuel to this, Froude's *Remains*, a volume of provocative *obiter dicta* (edited by J. B. Mozley and carrying a preface by Newman) had recently been published when Church went into residence as a Fellow.²¹

He entered the inner counsels of the Movement just when the tempo sharply increased. Though junior in the group to men like Marriott and Thomas Mozley, and less prominent than the active, shrewd, sound but unrewarded James Mozley (who had taken his degree at Oriel but could not seem to get a Fellowship at that time), Church rapidly gained for himself a triumviral position beside those great ones, Newman and Rogers. In this last-named figure he had now met the dark

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horse of the whole Tractarian story so far as future developments were concerned. The closest friend of Newman after Froude's death, Frederic Rogers came up to Oxford from Eton where he had been one of Gladstone's contemporaries.* As an undergraduate at Oriel he received his tutoring from both Newman and Hurrell Froude. His brilliance gained him the Craven scholarship in 1829 and, after that, a double first. In his fourth year he came to know Newman very intimately, reading under him in college and at Iffley. He was elected Fellow of Oriel in 1833, but often resided in London to pursue his law studies. Though a layman, Rogers was a main director of Tractarian policy and acted as treasurer of the Movement. He was absent from Oriel during Church's first year as a Fellow, and it is likely that Newman began then to confide in his younger associate. That Rogers kept in close touch with the pair of them is evident from his letters. One dated from Eliot Place, 16 September 1839, suggests that, as Church had promised to spend a few days in town with Rogers before the end of the Vacation, it would be pleasant if Newman came over to stay at the same time. It also contains a sample of the irreverent leg-pulling which Rogers could adopt towards the Vicar of St. Mary's, whom he reproves for making himself conspicuous by going about in 'short trousers, worsted stockings and bad gloves—a kind of notoriety more befitting a Methodist preacher than an "Anglo-Catholic" priest . . .'. Rogers had a profound affection for Newman, but at a serious juncture he was the sort of man to be as plain with the Tractarian leader as Joab was with David. Church had in him more of the Jonathan when separation came.²²

In the meantime there was reserved for Rogers and Church, and one or two besides, the privilege of knowing Newman intimately in all moods when his powers were at the zenith. Others thronged the well-known breakfast parties and evening gatherings, thrilled to follow a conversation which had the range and peculiar stamp of a large and original mind—now gentle, now

* He was brought up in London but the death of his uncle, Sir John Rogers, in 1847 caused his father to resign his post at the Audit Office and, with the title of Sir Frederick Leman Rogers, move to the family estate at Blachford in Devon. When his father died, four years later, Frederic came into the property as eighth baronet. After distinguished service at the Colonial Office he was made Lord Blachford on retirement by Mr. Gladstone in 1871.

incisive, always alive. But Church remembered most, perhaps, those more private meetings when, amongst trusted friends, all Newman's shyness and his fear of looking like a hero were thrown off and he could give vent to his 'profound sense of the incomplete and ridiculous in this world'. Joy and animation flooded the room in his presence; but there would be silences too and times when a shadow clouded that noble face. And it was then, we must suppose, that 'the violin, which he knew how to touch, came into play'.²³

A point upon which Newman liked to insist for himself and his close friends was that they should stay up in the Long Vacation to do some reading together. Church enjoyed the arrangement and wrote home on 21 July 1840: 'There are not very many people in residence, but of those who are here, one sees so much more than at other times that if they are a decent lot of people, the quality makes up for the diminution of quantity in the article of society. Newman, Rogers, and myself compose the residents at Oriel now, and we have it very cosily to ourselves, seeing the five or six out-college friends, who are up, whenever we please.'²⁴

Amongst the innermost members of the Movement at this time were Manuel Johnson, James Mozley, and James Hope. When Hope went off for his health's sake in the autumn for a winter holiday in Italy, Rogers accompanied him and was away till May 1841. During his absence he received letters from Church telling him of university gossip and the latest excitements. Church's own religious affinities can be gathered from what he wrote at the beginning of November. He would go apparently with other Tractarian spirits to enjoy the dinners and disputations which were held in the tower over Exeter gateway. A clique which included not only Bowyer and Jack Morris but that prince of provocation and harangue, W. G. Ward, undoubtedly loved to 'talk strong'; and up there the vogue was to 'laugh till their heads were dizzy' on any subject that might lend itself to theological prejudice. One of these symposia was enlivened by the appearance of Pugin, then on a visit to Oxford. He came as Bloxam's guest but got involved with another gentleman in 'a fight about Gothic and Italian architecture' while Ward 'repeatedly jumped up and almost screamed in ecstasy at what was said'. Church himself, on a

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later visit to the tower, was roused (he says) ‘to defend myself for thinking Hooker not merely a respectable person, but a Catholic divine, and entitled to be looked up to as a teacher’.²⁵

IV. AUTHORITIES IN OPPOSITION, 1841-3

‘Magnify your office’, urged Newman when he addressed his fellow priests in the first of the Tracts. By persuading as many ordained men as possible to take seriously their Apostolical status, he meant to revive the Catholic ideal within the English Church. If this had succeeded the next stage would presumably have been for the clergy as a body to make clear to the State what the Church existed for. Theoretically, had the bishops responded, the Movement would have enabled the Church of England to strike a momentous blow against the spirit of Erastianism. She would, at the same time, have recovered a new sense of unity through the self-dedication of her ministers at all levels. The rank and file of clergymen would, according to the theory, have accepted a position of reverent and implicit obedience to their hierarchical superiors. In practice, however, the Church was not united by the Movement. Instead of being strengthened to resist the encroachments of the State she became divided against herself by a violent outburst of party spirit. The bishops as a whole did not respond to Newman’s call. And, nearer home than that, the colleges were presided over in most cases by a body of men implacably hostile to Newmanism. Heads of Houses when they met at the Hebdomadal Board took the lead from Hawkins and his Evangelical confederates, undeterred by any patriarchial disapproval from an ancient High Churchman like Routh of Magdalen. Allied with these ultra-Protestant forces in the government of the University were certain Latitudinarian figures, notably represented by Dr. Hampden. His election as Regius Professor of Divinity in 1836 had been opposed by the Tractarians with more bitterness than has subsequently seemed to their credit. Be that as it may, the official régime at Oxford in the ’forties amounted to a close corporation of small potentates who, meaning to scotch Newman, took steps to magnify their office. They claimed an authority with nothing Apostolical

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about it, and presented to the Movement a wall of refusal best calculated to provoke younger men to fight. So, wrote Church, who was thick with the rebels, ‘while on the one side there was burning and devouring earnestness, and that power of conviction which doubles the strength of the strong, there was on the other a serene ignoring of all that was going on, worthy of a set of dignified French *abbés* on the eve of the Revolution’.²⁶

The explosive moment arrived when Newman published his historic Tract 90 on 27 February 1841. Church was at the centre of things at this crisis and sent a full account of it to reach Rogers in Italy. That letter, together with Newman’s postscript, constitutes the authoritative version of the affair from the Tractarian side. The object of the Tract, to show that the Thirty-nine Articles could bear a Catholic interpretation on many points, really involved (said Church) ‘putting out explicitly what of course many must have felt more or less for a long time’. To Church and others within the Movement there was nothing revolutionary in the contention, for instance, ‘that the article on *Masses* did not condemn the Sacrifice of the Mass, or that on Purgatory, *all* Catholic opinions on the subject’. But the thing came out, as Church said, ‘at an unlucky time’. What might have been allowed by anyone looking historically into the various streams of Anglican theology, could not be expected to receive dispassionate examination just then because of nervous outbursts against ‘Puseyism’ in Parliament and the newspapers. Newman, supported by the opinion of Keble and Henry Wilberforce, failed to realize how tense the atmosphere was when he let the Tract go forth. He never anticipated anything like the selling of 2,500 copies of it in London within a fortnight. But Church saw how the incendiary spark was actually set going in Oxford. Apart from the events themselves, it is of interest to note his aptitude for sizing up enemy tactics in the party war. He concentrates upon the politics of the struggle, rather than its theology. The villain of the piece, whose name would otherwise have been long since forgotten, has been fixed for us, in Church’s description, like a fly in amber:

Tait of Balliol first began to talk fiercely; he had thought himself secure behind the Articles, and found his entrenchments suddenly

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turned. But he was, after all, merely a skirmisher set on to rouse people by Golightly, whose genius and activity have contributed in the greatest degree to raise and direct the storm. He saw his advantage from the first, and has used it well. He first puffed the tract all over Oxford as the greatest ‘curiosity’ that had been seen for some time; his diligence and activity were unwearied. He then turned his attention to the country, became a purchaser of No. 90 to such an amount that Parker could hardly supply him, and sent copies to all the bishops, etc. In the course of a week he had got the agitation into a satisfactory state, and his efforts were redoubled. He then made an application to the Rector of Exeter to be allowed to come and state the case to him, with the view of his heading a movement; but he was politely refused admittance. He had better success with the Warden of Wadham. It was determined, in the first instance, to move the tutors; and accordingly last Monday came a letter to the editor of the Tracts, attacking No. 90, as removing all fences against Rome, and calling on the said editor to give up the name of the writer. This was signed by four senior tutors, Churton, B.N.C.; Wilson, St. John’s; Griffiths, Wadham; and Tait—gentlemen who had scarcely the happiness of each other’s acquaintance till Golightly’s skill harnessed them together. He fought hard to get Eden, but failed; as also in his attempts on Johnson of Queen’s, and Twiss, and Hansell, and Hussey, etc., etc. . . .

The row, which has been prodigious they say, has made Golightly a great man. He now ventures to patronize the Provost, who even condescended to lose his breakfast t’other day to hear G. prose. He has received letters of thanks for his great and indefatigable exertions, from four bishops, London, Chester, Chichester, and Winton. It is supposed that a niche will be left for him among the great Reformers, in the Memorial, and that his life will be put in Biographical Dictionaries. Newman talks of him as a future ‘great man’.²⁷

These machinations led the Heads of Houses, without allowing any opportunity for the case to be defended, to placard Oxford with a solemn condemnation of the Tract as dishonest. But the matter received no official notice from Convocation. Newman, in fact, deflated the pompous temerity of his enemies —by avowing his authorship and producing some conclusive quotations in support of his thesis; by bringing the series of Tracts to an end; and by offering, if the Bishop of Oxford required it, to withdraw the offending Tract 90. The friendly

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Bagot assured him there was no need to withdraw it; and soon it looked as though the crisis had blown over. In the long run Newman certainly won, and the Anglo-Catholic contention about the Articles is widely held as a matter of course in the Church of England today.

But in 1841 the lull which followed the storm proved entirely unreal. A state of war existed between the Heads of Houses and the Tractarian party. Church had reason to know what it meant. His position as a Tutor of Oriel raised the question of divided loyalties. Would he, in dealing with undergraduates, show himself a Newmanite; or would he defer to the policy of Dr. Hawkins, the Provost of the college, who was a leader in the opposite camp? After the appearance of Tract 90, Church did the honest thing by writing to the Provost and saying that he agreed in general with the line taken by the Tract in regard to the Articles, and offering to resign his Tutorship. Hawkins, who was losing two of his four Tutors by marriage, could ill afford to let Church go just then. He told him therefore that he regarded him as a young man who did not know his own mind in the matter, and suggested that he stayed on. Church refused to acquiesce in this view of himself, realizing that such an understanding meant being kept on sufferance until it suited the Provost to turn him off. Moberly, when informed of this, advised Church to do no more but await events. Towards the end of June, Newman and Rogers, who were also consulted, urged him to bring matters to a head. Hawkins, however, forestalled Church by sending for him again and saying that if he were still in the same mind he would have to accept his resignation. Then he added an offer to let him retain the Tutorship for the time being, so long as he did not lecture on the Articles. Church declined this and pointed out that the Heads of Houses had themselves quoted a statute in which the teaching of the Articles was one of the duties of a Tutor. All that Hawkins could then propose was that the matter be referred to the Vice-Chancellor. Obviously Church's resignation had been determined upon. But he played his losing hand stubbornly to the end so that his adversary should have no loophole for claiming that he had acted constitutionally. Church reported matters to Newman in a letter dated from Oriel, 26 June 1841:

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I did not see the Provost to speak to, after I left you, so I sent him a note saying that I had rather that the matter should not be referred to the Vice-Chancellor, and that it would be absurd for me to ask for time to reconsider. So things stand. He is puzzled about our Divines. He asked whether Andrewes, Bull, etc., would agree with No. 90. I said I did not know whether every one would agree with every word of the Tract, but that I thought they would strongly condemn and repudiate the censure of the Heads of Houses.²⁸

When Newman received this communication he was living at Littlemore, a hamlet some three miles from Oxford, which came within the parochial cure of the Vicar of St. Mary's. Besides building a daughter church there, Newman had purchased a plot of land and turned a disused granary into cottage-like premises to form a house of retreat for himself and his religious followers whenever they cared to go. Littlemore is symbolic of what the Church of England gradually became for Newman—a Zoar, like the 'little' place where Lot found temporary sojourn when he was escaping from Sodom. Here for three and a half years, keeping aloof from the University, he could pray and study and write and brood.

What had happened to precipitate this withdrawal is one of the psychological mysteries. And Church found himself an intimate witness of it. Both before and after Tract 90 he was the confidant of that subtle but broken leader whom inward as well as outward forces helped to turn into a recluse at the crucial moment of the campaign. 'I cannot forget', wrote the Cardinal afterwards, 'how, in the February of 1841, you suffered me day after day to open to you my anxieties, and plans, as events successively elicited them....' In the course of that year Newman's mind, as we see in the *Apologia*, was undergoing a revolutionary transformation of a sort beyond the power of his friends to arrest. Church was one who shared the feeling which called forth strong protest from the Vicar of St. Mary's against setting up the Jerusalem Bishopric. He also, like Newman, felt that the friendly assurance of Dr. Bagot, after Tract 90, had taken on a hollow appearance when the Bishop of Chester and other diocesans persisted in their reckless attacks. But what must he have thought as the author of the Tract himself began to change his attitude to the basis of Anglican claims? And it pained Newman no less to discover the gulf that was opening

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between him and his ‘friends of the moderate Apostolical party’. For they were the men who ‘stood up for Tract 90 partly from faith in me, certainly from generous and kind feeling, and had thereby shared an obloquy which was none of theirs’.

He recognized that his new line of thought was bound to offend them as stultifying the very principles upon which he had led them in the controversy against Rome, and that men wanted to know which way he was going. ‘One of my familiar friends (Mr. Church), who was in the country at Christmas, 1841–2, reported to me the feeling that prevailed about me.’ Church’s kinsman, Moberly, had apparently felt that Newman was letting the opposition of the bishops weigh too much with him, and had disliked his ‘mysterious hints of “eventualities”’. Newman’s reply to Church, started on Christmas Eve, added to on Christmas Day (after he had ‘been dreaming of Moberly all night’), and finally qualified with a postscript on St. Stephen’s Day, occupies four pages of the *Apologia*. It indicates how difficult it must have been at that time either for him or his friends to be really sure what the end of all these heart-searchings would be. Anglicanism, in his mind, had a sporting chance to prove itself capable of survival and advance: that was about the sum of things. Only, he told Church, if the anti-Catholic rulings of the bishops went much further, ‘I should be driven into the Refuge for the Destitute’. By that, apparently, he meant resigning from St. Mary’s and withdrawing completely to Littlemore. It took the best part of two years before Newman reached that position. What Church went through in the meantime can only be imagined. Living a half-life at Oriel, without his Tutorship and under the Provost’s disfavour, he had only an intermittent contact with the great friend who was now so sadly bemused. But he accepted without despondency the fact that the author of Tract 90 could not fight back when misrepresented by the authorities. He also noticed the chill suffered by the sensitive Newman when friends disapproved. ‘The true party leader’, observed Church, looking back, ‘takes these things as part of that tiresome human stupidity and perverseness with which he must make his account.’²⁹

Such a remark comes appropriately from one who, though

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too retiring to accept leadership himself, always got rather a thrill out of party warfare. Something in Church seemed to thrive under stormy conditions. No one need be sorry for him, either at Oxford or elsewhere, fighting against odds. He loved the idea and never entertained much doubt of snatching the ultimate victory. Intellectually he could rise entirely clear of party bias, but in the thick of an honest mêlée he was the partisan *par excellence*. He, perhaps more than any of the other Tractarians, appreciated the Movement as a movement in the clannish sense. His best writing is about causes and campaigns, scenes of action or men under the test of historic issues. He could hit off the virtues of his comrades-in-arms at Oxford and note with a military eye the development of a strategic situation. No trick or subterfuge escaped him; and, though never frivolous about the things at stake, he could not resist the humour of observing how people behave under excitement.

He was provided with a rowdy enough scene in June 1843. The suspension of Dr. Pusey by the Heads of Houses had incensed the Tractarians and most young men of spirit in the place. Hostility centred upon the chief inquisitor, Dr. Jelf, whom it was proposed to hiss out of the Sheldonian at the forthcoming Commemoration. A further opportunity occurred of humiliating the Heads on the same day. It was discovered, just before the ceremony, that the American Minister, Everett, upon whom the authorities were to confer an honorary degree, was ruled out from such an honour by being a Unitarian. Apologies were conveyed afterwards to the unfortunate Mr. Everett who was the occasion of the uproar and not its object. However disgraceful, the affair had hardly been dull. Church wrote, for Rogers's benefit, an inimitable account of the breakfast-time activities of those in charge of the plot; and, after relating how the gallery treated Jelf, went on to say:

Meanwhile, under cover of this cannonade, important events were going on below. I was in the body of the room, and I could see the V.-C. get up, and gesticulate, and then sit down as if in despair; but every one about me thought that he was waiting till he could be heard. But he knew a trick worth two of that. Why should he want to be heard, or to hear? So, in course of time, why or wherefore having been concealed by the crowd, up emerges Mr. Everett in red

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gown, and by the helping hand of the V.-C. is comfortably installed among the D.C.L.'s.

Such was the scene from a distance; but round the foot of the V.-C's tribunal another storm had been raging. There it was perceived that Dr. Bliss, in spite of the gallery fire, was presenting Mr. Everett; that the V.-C. was asking the sense of Convocation, that the proctors were taking off their caps; there, accordingly, Marriott got upon a form, and was seen moving his lips, and gesticulating to the V.-C. He affirms, and it is believed, that he made a Latin speech, which he has since put into writing. There also were frantic and furious struggles made to draw the V.-C's attention; wild yells of '*non placet*' and '*peto scrutinium*' were distinguished by the bystanders very plainly. At last the V.-C. heard them; but 'after he had sent the bedels to conduct Mr. Everett to him'. Those were moments of most intense and agonizing excitement, Woollcombe of Balliol all but flew at Cox the poker to throttle him for telling Woollcombe that his *non placet* was too late. However, too late it was to prevent Mr. Everett from being a Doctor at least *de facto*. So were the *non placets* floored, and the V.-C. sat down triumphing—blessing, if he had any gratitude, his stars and the undergraduates, the powers above.³⁰

There is much more of this, too long to quote. It serves to illustrate the side of Church, encouraged by Rogers, which could detach itself—at least momentarily—from the gloomy trend of things in 1843.

V. TRAGIC COLLAPSE, 1843-5

Though Newman had moved his library to Littlemore in February 1841, he did not entirely sever his connexion with Oriel. Besides the fact that he retained his Fellowship, church duties at St. Mary's brought him in to sleep and have meals in college on Saturdays and Sundays. He came frequently on other days of the week as well, according to the Buttery Books, even though he had felt for several years out of harmony with the Provost and most of the Common Room. His continued appearances are probably accounted for by his personal friendship with Marriott and Church.³¹

Nevertheless, his moral withdrawal was real, and had serious effects. The first of these was the growth of a reckless and doc-

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trinaire faction in religious circles within the University. As Church says:

The Tractarians had been preaching that the Church of England, with all its Protestant feeling and all its Protestant acts and history, was yet, as it professed to be, part and parcel of the great historic Catholic Church, which had framed the Creeds, which had continued the Sacraments, which had preached and taught out of the Bible, which had given us our immemorial prayers. They had spared no pains to make out this great commonplace from history and theology; nor had they spared pains, while insisting on this dominant feature in the English Church, to draw strongly and broadly the lines which distinguished it from Rome.³²

But now, new men came into prominence loudly asserting that Roman standards alone could provide the norm of what full Catholicism meant. In the centre of these Papist-Tractarians moved the meteoric figure of W. G. Ward, from whom Church, though thoroughly disagreeing with him, could not withhold admiration. Ward, whose flair was for ideas and intellectual play, had no time for that view which sees English Catholicism as a hard-won position, rooted in history and appealing to facts. Anything like an organic conception of the Church, whose doctrine and liturgy had been shaped by centuries of actual growth, was beyond the ability of his logical mind to appreciate. What Ward's position was became finally apparent in June 1844 with the publication of his book, significantly entitled, *The Ideal of a Christian Church*. In it he forced Anglican controversy quite wantonly beyond the points claimed in Tract 90. Rome, according to the *Ideal*, offered the Catholic pattern, perfect, ready-made: it only remained for Englishmen to unsay their history, cut through all such anomalies as the Prayer Book might present, and adopt the Roman way. Newman alone in Oxford had the personal authority to put such an arrant mishandling of the situation effectively out of court. And Newman in the full flush of confident leadership would have done it. But something had happened which sucked all the old fight out of him. For two or three years before the end came he had withdrawn from the field as a champion of the *Via Media*. During that time Ward had the theological arena to himself and seemed to be dragging the name

of Newman at his tail. Whatever qualifying points the old leader might have interposed, it was (says Church) 'all over with his command of time, his liberty to make up his mind slowly on the great decision. He had to go at Mr. Ward's pace and not his own'.³³

The question arises about the almost unbelievable patience shown towards Newman by his friends, and notably by Richard Church himself, during all this time. Why did they not write him off as an Anglican and tell him so? The author of the *Apologia*, looking back long afterwards upon those fevered years which followed the issue of Tract 90, has declared—'I was on my death-bed, as regards my membership of the Anglican Church, though at the time I became aware of it only by degrees.' There is no reason to doubt his sincerity, nor to wonder at there being local associates of his who gave him credit for wrestling against fears which might yet be overcome. In those days hardly any man of first-rate character and intelligence had actually left the Church of England to become a Papist. The pathetically weak concessions, made by Newman at this stage, towards the Anglican position did preserve a flicker of hope which, for friendship's sake, they had to make the most of. He, for his part, vainly thought by study to resist the logic of an assumption to which, at the deepest level of his being, he had already succumbed. We may be pretty sure that the scales were not really turned by intellectual considerations, one way or the other. Church expressed true insight as well as sympathy when he observed—'The mind, in such a strain of buffeting, is never in one stay. The old seems impregnable, yet it has been undermined; the new is indignantly and honestly repelled, and yet leaves behind it its never-to-be-forgotten and unaccountable spell. . . .' For a time something still held the wretched waverer back, toying with considerations which to others might seem altogether flimsy. Perhaps it was a desire not to desert and not to hurt his old Tractarian friends which, as much as anything, kept Newman from the final step and brought him in from Littlemore so often to his rooms, and theirs, at Oriel.³⁴

But by 1843 certain moderates of the Movement, stung by the split in the camp which left one group heading openly for Rome, began to harden themselves to meet realities. There

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had always been, amongst the original members and their immediate adherents, a core of vitality which might possibly ensure a continuance of the cause, whatever happened to their unpredictable leader. Besides Pusey and Keble, who stood somewhat aloof from vehement measures, there were two of Newman's own henchmen quite capable of calling a halt. Rogers, as early as September 1839, had taken Newman up over an expression he used about 'things coming to the worst'. He had never stomached what he saw of Continental Catholicism, and at one time the Vicar of St. Mary's accepted his outspoken comments about it. Gradually, however, it became clear to Rogers that they were not at one on the Roman question.* In the spring of 1843, therefore (about the time of the half-yearly Oriel meeting which non-resident Fellows were expected to attend), he took the step of terminating his old relations with Newman. He wrote, in a manly letter from the Temple, dated 3 April 1843:

I cannot disguise from myself how very improbable—perhaps impossible—a recurrence to our former terms is. But I wish, before the time has passed for such an acknowledgment, to have said how deeply and painfully I feel . . . the greatness of what I am losing, and to thank you for all you have done and been to me.³⁵

As a result of this severance of intimacy, Newman and Rogers each leaned more heavily upon the friendship of Church who became, in fact, Rogers's closest ally for the rest of his life. Church's relations with Newman are not so easy to trace because regular access to each other at Oriel saved them the need to write letters. Judging, however, by his actions at the crisis and by Newman's unbroken regard for him ever afterwards, it can safely be inferred that Church's personal attitude remained entirely unshaken amidst the process which was isolating Newman visibly from most of his old friends. A new disposition of forces had to take place amongst the more responsible Tractarians as it became clear that Newman's Anglican connexion

* Isaac Williams says that Rogers told him how uncomfortable he felt in retrospect about his relations with Newman in the last part of their college life—'for seeing him daily as a Fellow, living in the same staircase, and having been in the habit of living with him, he entered into constant controversies and disputations with him, which produced at length a sore and irritable feeling, so that there ceased at last to be any friendliness between them, in that his separation from us'. (*Autobiography of Isaac Williams*, 123.)

was almost dissolved. Affairs all round were in a parlous state. That summer, by an act of frantic injustice and folly, the Vice-Chancellor had suspended Dr. Pusey from preaching within the University for two years. Keble, aware of Newman's latest mind, was 'a depressed, almost a broken man'. Who, then, should take the lead? James Mozley, whose frequent correspondence with Richard Church began at this time, wrote on 11 September 1843:

Things are looking melancholy now, my dear Church, and you and I and all of us *who can act together* must be bestirring ourselves. I feel as if a new stage in the drama were beginning, in which we shall have to do the uncomfortable thing, and take rather higher parts than we have done hitherto, or at any rate we must try our best.³⁶

News came that Newman had resigned his post as Vicar of St. Mary's on 18 September. A week later he delivered at Littlemore his famous and pathetic sermon on the 'Parting of Friends'. The tenderness which he expressed towards his old associates of the Movement, some of them sobbing in the congregation, was only outdone by the bitter lamentation which the speaker poured out upon the Church of England.

Many members of the High Church party, who had expected such great things from Newman, now found themselves in a demoralized state. They told in whispers of the progress he made poring in seclusion, month after month, over Church history and the ancient heresies. And the grand purpose of all this research? What was it but to find the assured *locus* of salvation, to identify the limits of the Catholic Church? Half the University seemed to be involved and come to an academic standstill. Indeed the final period of the Movement found Oxford dazed under a sultry theological atmosphere such as it has never known before or since. Cynics might call it the 'last enchantments of the Middle Age' gone maudlin. At least Mark Pattison, in his *Memoirs*, wonders whatever possessed him. For the space of several years, he says, his rational faculties almost deserted him to make way for an obsession about dying within the Catholic pale. He had come under the Newmanite spell in its extreme stage. A diary which he was keeping at this time includes the record of his experiences during a short stay at

Littlemore in October 1843. Entries from it reveal a curious hotch-potch of pietism and ecclesiastical trivia. How many other young men of intellectual mark fell victims to this psychological miasma it is impossible to say.³⁷

The authorities, now very jumpy, kept a look-out for Newman's fellow-travellers. Church had been warned by the head of his college that if he was thinking of proceeding to priest's orders his letters testimonial might have to be refused. From home, too, he had to meet anxious inquiries about his position because a number of former Tractarians were becoming Roman Catholics. He knew two or three of those who went over, but was not intimate with any of them. He told his mother this, in a letter dated 1 November 1843, and assured her that he himself was in no danger for, as he put it, 'I never felt a temptation to move'. He did not blame her for asking him at a time when the whole party was under suspicion. But, he added:

there is no help for it; there is no way of stopping the popular outcry just now without abandoning what seems true. We must be content to live and perhaps die, suspected. In some cases perhaps, the outcry, as often happens, will verify itself; but it will not be so with the great body; and perhaps the next generation may profit by what they have done towards breaking down unchristian prejudices. Meantime the game is not up . . .³⁸

Church's escape from the Romanist mania was not a narrow one like Mark Pattison's. He apparently went through no sort of morbid doubts. But he owed his security partly to the same strain of mental curiosity which saved the future Rector of Lincoln. They were both of them scholars with a natural bent for humanism. The very business of engaging in tasks such as editing one of the Fathers, or writing one of the *Lives of the Saints* for Newman's series, encouraged a basic devotion to study. What the party interest regarded as Catholic history soon made its appeal to Pattison and Church simply as history: they enjoyed grappling with the Middle Ages for truth's sake rather than for argument's sake. Moreover, the articles which they contributed to the *Christian Remembrancer* gave them a certain literary as distinct from a strictly theological pleasure. Church, however, found himself in much better case than Pattison when it came to personal temperament, for he had a serene nature

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and never worried about what others were thinking of him. His friendship with Lake of Balliol and James Mozley, men of a critical but eirenenical temper, chimed in exactly with Church's pursuit of a Tractarian line which was firm without being fanatical. To their influence must be added that of the shrewd, life-loving, and witty Frederic Rogers. It was with that barrister friend that Church went off to Brittany in the August and September of 1844. Leaving behind an Oxford raised to fever-heat by the appearance of Ward's *Ideal*, they got an exhilarating impression of a Catholic way of life into which men are born as a community, rather than driven or fascinated as converts. Nothing could have been more wholesome for Church in preparation for what lay ahead.³⁹

The need, widely felt in Oxford and beyond, to see Ward's book officially repudiated brought the Hebdomadal Board together in December. They could not, however, resist the temptation to widen the issue and aim what they hoped would be a mortal thrust at the Tractarian party as a whole. It was proposed to bring before Convocation in February, along with Ward's business, a measure which would require members of the University to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles and also make a specifically Protestant declaration at the same time. Warned to withdraw such a novel test, the Board did so in January. But in its place a proposal was rushed through to get from the University a formal censure of the principles of Tract 90. Now to drag this up again after four years struck many as being ungenerous as well as unwise. Others besides Tractarians deplored any attempt to inflict a retrospective wound upon Newman whose broken spirit was suffering enough already in its exile. But the framers of this mean proposal, blind to the general unpopularity of what they were doing, rallied their non-resident supporters for the forthcoming Convocation. So did the other side. Masters of Arts and Doctors of Divinity from far afield—peers, bishops, politicians, country squires and parsons—all roused themselves to get up to Oxford and cast their votes. It was to be the decisive battle between the Heads of Houses and the Newmanites after years of frustrated campaigning. And, very happily, there fell to Church the opportunity both of protecting Newman in public and saving the University from disgracing its good name for sense and justice.

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Being Proctor that year with Guillemard, he went about quietly to see that they should, if occasion came, use their constitutional power of veto. A representative meeting was hurriedly called to endorse the idea. It was attended by leading men from London, of whom Mr. Gladstone was one, and by residents who included some of the younger Liberals as well as members of the party. Notice of the intention to stop proceedings was sent to the authorities; and, before it was known what their answer would be, Church wrote a note to Newman:

I had made up my mind to veto from the first, and have little doubt that Guillemard will agree to it. But it need not be talked about more than is necessary. . . . Gladstone had written to the Provost against this move [i.e. of the Board], and asking for delay. We shall hear the letter on Monday. I am only afraid of their delaying it, though as yet they have shown no symptoms of shrinking. It would not be very respectable to change their minds again, but I think it would be their best game.⁴⁰

His desire for a show-down was not disappointed. The Board, thinking perhaps that they had support enough to make any veto look small, decided not to delay or withdraw.

A mantle of snow covered the city of Oxford on Thursday, 13 February 1845, as the various academical figures, across from college or up from London and the country, made their way through Broad Street for Convocation. Undergraduates crowded the railings of the Sheldonian to cheer or mock the arrivals. From a window opposite, Charles Church, then also at Oriel, watched the procession of dignitaries enter—his brother Richard amongst them. Then they had to await results, some climbing to the roof of the building, others intent by the doors, to hear the shouting or muffled roars from within which indicated at intervals how the proceedings were going. Inside the Theatre itself, crowded in every part, a memorable scene was being enacted. Ward, standing before the authorities, made his long and preposterous defence amidst cheers and howls—and laughter. How popular he was, and how hostile the temper of the assembly towards repressive measures against persons, showed itself by the voting. The *Ideal* was heavily condemned but Ward himself was deprived of his degree by only a small majority. Then came the culminating moment

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of the day. The Tract 90 censure was proposed, the two Proctors rose and Guillemand, as senior, ‘delivered his veto with immense effect. A shout of “*Non*” was raised, and resounded through the whole building, and “*Placets*” from the other side, over which Guillemand’s “*Nobis procuratoribus non placet*” was heard like a trumpet, and cheered enormously. The Dean of Chichester threw himself out of his doctor’s seat and shook both Proctors violently by the hand.’ Proceedings stopped at once; the Vice-Chancellor, gathering up his gown, left the throne and hurried from the Theatre. According to rumour, he was greeted with hisses at the door and a certain number of stray snowballs from the crowd in the street. The Proctors, as they emerged, were loudly cheered by the undergraduates—a foretaste of the address of thanks, signed by some five hundred members of the University, which was presented to them afterwards. That ‘Eve of St. Valentine’ became a date much to be held in honour by future generations in the Tractarian calendar. For Richard Church it ranked, perhaps, as the greatest day of his life. At any rate it is the one by which he has been ever since remembered, for dramatic scenes were not normally his line.⁴¹

His satisfaction at the time, however, was clouded by concern for the condemned man (whom Mozley and others of the party considered to have got more sympathy than he deserved). In a letter to his mother that same evening Church wrote:

You will probably have seen the result of today’s proceedings in the *Times* before you receive this. They have been painful proceedings, and the University has committed itself to measures which, whatever Ward has said, are flagrantly disproportionate to his offence. . . . The only thing to relieve today has been the extreme satisfaction I had in helping to veto the third iniquitous measure against Newman. It was worth while being proctor to have had the unmixed pleasure of doing this.⁴²

Long afterwards, in 1871, Newman dedicated a volume of University Sermons to Church and recorded publicly ‘the memory of your great act of friendship, as well as justice and courage’ which, in February 1845, ‘shielded me from the *civium ardor prava jubentium*’. The Proctors’ action, at the time it took place, constituted little more than a gesture, albeit one of real signifi-

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cance. Practically, it could not hold up a great university for long.⁴³

Nor did it contribute anything to prevent Newman's secession from the Church of England. He had counted the cost. 'Tears come into my eyes', he wrote on 3 April, 'from the accident of this time, when I am giving up so much I love . . . yet really, my dear Church, I have never for an instant had even the temptation of repenting my leaving Oxford.' He was only waiting till October to resign his Fellowship at Oriel: after that, submission to Rome would not be long delayed. The inner circle of Tractarians had to go about their business with this gloomy knowledge overshadowing them. Newman still lingered at Littlemore through the summer; and Church, along with Copeland and other friends, 'would call or dine . . . once or so in the week'. When the fatal month arrived the Fellowship was duly resigned. On 8 October a representative was on his way to Littlemore to embrace into the Roman Communion its most notable convert. Church received, and passed on to Pattison, a letter written by Newman that day to his old friends at Oxford telling them of the event. Richard also conveyed the news to his mother:

You will be distressed to hear what I have just this moment heard from himself, that Newman has left us, and joined the Church of Rome. It is a matter on which I can say little at present. I will ask you to pardon me once for all for my reserve on these points. It is so intensely painful to me to talk of them with those who do not know the whole case, and who, naturally, from a distance, cannot have it put before them, that it has seemed better to abstain from it altogether. I will only say that about myself personally, you need not make yourself unhappy.—Ever your affectionate son,

R.W.C.

This is the last extant letter before Mrs. Crokat's sudden death at Botley a few weeks later. Mother and son had always been on such terms of deep attachment that the blow left Church doubly stricken at the end of an altogether melancholy year.⁴⁴

Newman's secession, though it came as a general relief after so long a period of strain, caused painful embarrassments to those who had known him best. The spectacle of other converts going over only added gall. Keble and Pusey braced themselves to each blow with pathetic resignation. Rogers and

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Mozley viewed the whole business ‘with utter repugnance’. The latter, to strike a blow for Anglican loyalties when so much demoralization was rife, wrote in December (for the *Christian Remembrancer*) an article on Newman marked by certain traces of ill-temper. Either that, or some ‘hasty word’ spoken of him by Newman, led to their complete and lasting estrangement. But there remained a small band, says Mark Pattison, ‘to keep each other in countenance and meet at Manuel Johnson’s for our Sunday dinner—Church, Marriott, Copeland, myself and others’.⁴⁵

At a time when most of his old associates kept away, Church showed his affection for Newman by being with him repeatedly to the last. This is the more noteworthy in view of his entire freedom from any tendency to become a Roman Catholic himself. After 8 October, he and James Robert Hope were ‘the only Anglican friends whom Newman saw before going up to Oscott on the 31st to receive Confirmation at the hands of Dr. Wiseman’. Newman went to dine with the ever-hospitable Johnson on 9 December, and noted that ‘Church was there, who seems nearly the only person who is not too sore to bear the meeting . . .’. Wilfrid Ward’s biography also records that the future Cardinal, after going to Stonyhurst, found Pusey to greet him when he got back to Littlemore on 23 January; ‘and the faithful R. W. Church came to him next day from Oxford’. Finally, as is stated in the *Apologia*, he was one of that handful of friends who gathered at the Observatory to take leave of Newman when he spent his last night there on Sunday, 22 February 1846.⁴⁶

VI. FORWARD WITHOUT NEWMAN

The Oxford atmosphere in which the discredited Tractarians found themselves after the blow fell has been described by Church in a letter that leaves us to assume what effect the ‘sickening’ rumours had upon his own sensitive concern for religious truth:

We sat glumly at our breakfasts every morning, and then someone came in with news of something disagreeable—some one gone, some one sure to go.

The good Heads ate and drank, and only cared in an obscure

sort of way for these things. When an impudent and troublesome imposture is at last blown up, the impostors—and it was not they who went, but we who stayed, who were voted impostors—keep ‘coy’ and say little. We read, we worked at articles for the *Christian Remembrancer* and *Guardian*—*et voilà tout*. The only two ‘facts’ of the time were that Pusey and Keble did not move, and that James Mozley showed that there was one strong mind and soul still left in Oxford. All the rest were the recurring tales, each more sickening than the other, of the ‘goings over’; stories, often incredible, of the break-up of character for the moment; mixtures of tragic pathos with broad farce, of real self-sacrifice with determined indulgence in the pleasure of satisfying one mastering craving; of blundering trickery and a conscience like a compass which has lost its magnetism, with undoubted and most serious earnestness.⁴⁷

Henceforth the new topic in academic circles was University Reform, and on this issue Church came to have a share with the moderates through being a member of the Tutors’ Association. But religious questions, which he and his intimates had made the staple of their lives, now ceased to hold the main place in public attention. It began to seem a private affair whether a man remained a Protestant or became a Roman Catholic. As between the Anglican parties, when the air cleared, the Evangelicals felt themselves more than ever justified by the turn of events; and for intellectual men the vogue was towards Stanley and the Liberals.

Amongst the High Church following a sort of stoical conservatism set in, led along the path of saintliness by the honourable figure of Pusey, and encouraged by the old-fashioned sweetness of John Keble and Isaac Williams.* But, apart from these forerunners of Liddon and the modern Anglo-Catholics, there sprang up a small group of High Churchmen who, stung by what had happened, acknowledged that Anglican assumptions needed to be ‘closed with, and tested face to face in the light of fact and history’. Using that phrase, Church spoke specially for himself; but it was Mozley who, backed by Rogers, became for a time the articulate leader of the Tractarian remnant. The three of them remained principal associates in a long-term

* Of a pastorally heroic stamp (according to Ollard) was the noble Charles Marriott from whom, in the dark days of 1845, Edward King caught the spirit of holiness. He broke down from sheer overwork at the age of forty-four while he was Vicar of St. Mary’s, and died in 1858.

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venture to re-establish the true nature of the English Church. 'In those days of stress and sorrow were laid the beginnings of a new school, whose main purpose was to see things as they are; which had learned by experience to distrust unqualified admiration and unqualified disparagements; determined not to be blinded even by genius to plain certainties.'⁴⁸

To differ from Newman was no light matter, but his friends had to choose between him and Anglicanism. Much as Church shrank from any comparison with so brilliant a personality, there gradually devolved upon him a special share in the onus of finding an answer to the problem posed by the 1845 collapse. The essence of the case was plain. Newman had not gone over to Rome under the impression that he was joining a perfect institution. What he did believe was that the imperfections of the Papal system were destined by Divine Providence to be overruled from within. His secession, so far as the Church of England was concerned, meant that he had turned his back upon a religious institution which, whatever vestiges of holiness it might still possess, was hopelessly contaminated. He had been reluctantly driven to conclude that nothing could be made of a Church which was so much at the mercy of secular and heretical forces. That constituted a supreme challenge to those who remained Anglicans, and Church detected in it the tell-tale streak of fatalism. He took an historical rather than a theoretical view of religious institutions; and he regarded a situation, which might be dangerously threatened, as being still politically fluid. According to that conviction it was the business of churchmen to take up the fight where they found it in their own day rather than allow their dream of the past to bring on a melancholy obsession with the pattern of what ought to have been. His answer to Newman, implicit at the time of the crisis, had been borne out by hard experience when he wrote on behalf of all faithful Tractarians that their lost leader had 'despaired too soon' and retired from the contest 'long before he had a right to do so'.⁴⁹

But that was not all. By entering the fold of theological certainty Newman had also turned his back upon what, if he had foreseen it, must have seemed to him a much larger field of hopeless contamination. The civilization of Europe, dominated by rational and Liberal ideals, was soon to confront

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Biblical Christianity with such a challenge as the Oxford of 1845 had never contemplated. Newman, as if by instinct, had contracted out before the arrival in full force of intellectual ordeals which most Christians, except Roman Catholics, had to face for themselves during the rest of the century. To be engaged as a pathfinder for Anglicanism in a time when men should see the Gospel itself being repudiated, would appear to demand the impossible. Fortunately it came almost as second nature to Church to seek the measure of new situations and not feel depressed when events, under Providence, took some complicated and unexpected turn.⁵⁰

But if Newman's departure left his friends exposed to tempests of theology without the leadership they might have expected, he had certainly bestowed upon them a legacy of inspiration which nothing could take away. To the inner circle at Oxford he had been such a master in things spiritual as few generations could ever boast of having possessed. The testimonies of those who did not follow him to Rome form the best evidence of what he was. Men as diverse in achievement as Dean Stanley, J. A. Froude, Mark Pattison, and Dean Lake, speaking as they did many years afterwards of the impression he made upon them, add weight to the opinion of Principal Shairp that Newman was perhaps 'the most remarkable man whom the English Church has produced in any century'. But some of those who felt so impressed by his preaching and his personal charm do not seem to have assimilated his religious teaching. In this respect Church stands perhaps unique. His affection and veneration for the great teacher did not prevent him from becoming ultimately the most formidable critic of the line which Newman took. And that was precisely because no one understood so well the inner mind of the man who had been the means of igniting in his disciple the flame of holiness. Everyone knows that Church never ceased to be Newman's unreproachable friend. What is more, the future Dean continued to hold the future Cardinal in veneration as a guide whose main principles of religious teaching were permanently valid. In that which concerns the devotion to God of a moral personality in fear and trembling, Church was a Newmanite to his life's end.

Besides the elemental religious awe which the one, without creating it, awakened in the other there was some intellectual

plagiarism. Church took over certain portions of Newman's thinking and both as writer and preacher retailed them to others. At the conversational level there were actual words and phrases—calling mistakes 'floors', and referring to an informal friendship as 'talking to a man in your shirt-sleeves'—which he appropriated as keepsakes. But it is fortunate that he had something else to do besides overwhelm himself in the tedious cult of idolatry. To Copeland, a fellow-admirer of the old Tractarian chief, he wrote fifteen years afterwards: 'I often wish, as you say, that I had Boswellized. But unhappily, or happily, I didn't. And I often think with wonder, how much I should be puzzled if I were called on to draw up a sketch of those times and doings.' It is understandable that he should 'mourn over the utterly faded details'. But Church was not cast for the rôle of being any man's Boswell.

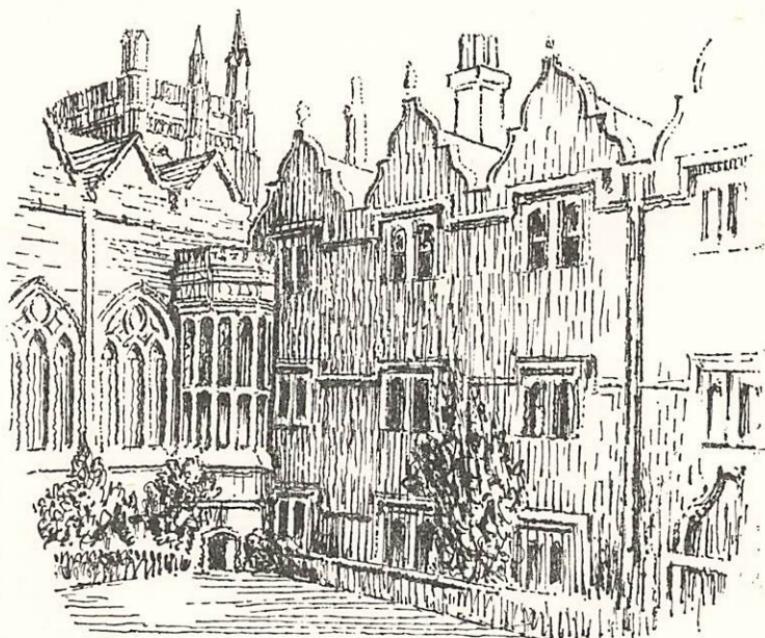
Failure to realize that may have caused disappointment to those who expected a budget of personal reminiscences when Church's volume, *The Oxford Movement*, appeared after his death. It needed to be read between the lines. For, as Lake remarked, 'Newman's character (which the *Times* absurdly says he mentions but slightly) is illustrated in every page'. In so far as it 'answered' the position embraced by the former Vicar of St. Mary's it did so with understandable reticence. When Church submitted the proof-sheets to Lord Acton he said, 'I have not attempted a complete criticism partly because I feel it beyond me, partly because it is against the grain.' The nature of the book presupposes a discriminating field of readers. Its pervading tone is one of gravity with gentleness. And this lifts it entirely out of the category of Thomas Mozley's interesting, but only interesting, *Reminiscences*. Both writers, for instance, describe Newman's lectures in Adam de Brome's Chapel, that 'dark, dreary appendage to St. Mary's on the north side'. But it was Church who caught the spirit of the place and centred it upon one who was more than a lecturer, speaking within its walls. Mozley has much to tell us of the great leader, his appearance and various details which he remembered. Church, using scarcely a descriptive phrase, leaves upon the mind a sense of what the man in the shadows was. Most significant of all, Mozley in the end shuffles off from the reader as a tired old man who has been near to big

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things in his time but found his own convictions only sagging at the knees as a result. The heart which speaks to us in *The Oxford Movement*, however chastened and held in command, carries its essential passion still unspent.⁵¹

Yet this great analogy remains: that Church took to heart from the example of Newman the profound lesson which, amid the ruins of fallen Jerusalem, the writer Baruch received from his broken master. It is all concentrated into the short forty-fifth chapter of the prophet Jeremiah. *The Lord said thus: Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not.*

PART TWO



Oriel College

CHAPTER THREE

From ‘Anselm’ to ‘Dante’



I. TRACTARIAN JOURNALISM

CHURCH made his first flights as an author under Newman's wing at Oxford. To furnish the Tractarian cause with a body of Patristic theology it was decided to publish a series called the 'Library of the Fathers', and he undertook to translate the *Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril of Jerusalem*. After scamped collaboration it appeared in 1838 with a preface by Newman; but Church never liked the task and said later how ashamed he felt about the number of mistakes it contained. So, he entered writing not as a poet or novelist but as a junior member of a highly-talented religious party doing a piece of text work.*

But this dubious start led to other things of a different nature. In 1838 Newman became sole editor of the *British Critic*, an old High Church monthly which (according to Canon Ollard) had been started in 1793 to voice principles opposed to those of the French Revolution. Newman had had part control of it from 1836, and he took over full command for Rivington just when the *British Magazine*, founded by Hugh James Rose in 1832, was ceasing to be the strong Tractarian organ it had been at the time the Movement began. The need to possess such an organ was made obvious when Dr. Arnold wrote his violent article against the 'Oxford Malignants' in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1836. The Low Church party could boast the noisy *Record* since 1828, though many Evangelicals preferred the *Christian Observer* and the *Standard*. But it was in order to have a means of expression as sound and reputable in scholarship

* His only other editorial undertaking proved entirely congenial. Keble's edition (1836) of the Works of Richard Hooker was revised by Church and Paget in 1888; Church himself having edited the First Book of the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, with a critical introduction, for the Clarendon Press series in 1873.

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as the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* that Newman principally valued the *British Critic*. It only remained in his hands till 1841, but during that time it carried great prestige because people knew they could find there the reflection of his views as well as those of Keble and Pusey. ‘One incidental use of the review’, according to James Mozley, ‘was to furnish a field—a sort of practice-ground—for the younger members of the party.’¹

Church contributed two articles on St. Anselm in 1843, but the editor then was Thomas Mozley, James’s brother. During his editorship, which lasted a little over two years, the *British Critic* was allowed to become too often the mouthpiece of such high-flown Romanizers as W. G. Ward, that *enfant terrible* whose reckless pronouncements the original Tractarians were finding unbearably obnoxious. He got hold of the paper (as the Dean remarked long afterwards) ‘and drove it like Phaeton till it upset, and he was tumbled into matrimony and the Roman Church’. Rivington the publisher became nervous; and in September 1843 James Mozley, knowing that his brother was giving up, made efforts to get Church to take over as editor. ‘Both Rogers and myself’, he wrote, ‘think that you would be just the person to succeed.’ Nothing, however, came of the suggestion and the *British Critic* was discontinued that autumn.²

The following July, Church received another letter from James Mozley to say that the *Christian Remembrancer* was to become a quarterly, and that he and William Scott of Hoxton were to be joint editors. The appearance of this responsible organ in October 1844 repaired the deficiency which the High Church party would otherwise have suffered. Mozley kept up his editorial connexion till 1855, and Church during that time made a series of lengthy and notable contributions. Six of them, together with two on St. Anselm from the *British Critic*, were collected into a volume called *Essays and Reviews* by R. W. Church.* It was published by J. and C. Mozley as an act of friendship in 1854; and, though difficult to obtain nowadays, is essential to an understanding of Church’s outlook during and just after the ascendancy of Newman at Oxford.

It is necessary to appreciate these articles for what they are.

* Not to be confused with the theological *Essays and Reviews*, of composite authorship, which made so notorious an appearance in 1860.

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Not only does their colouring, as the author himself said afterwards, belong to the time when they were written. Their form, too, indicates the sort of circle in which they were produced. The failings peculiar to academic journalists were scathingly referred to by Thomas Mozley in his *Reminiscences*. The young don, full of matter, often spread himself at that period in a way which no modern editor would tolerate. But, on the other hand, such articles as James Mozley wrote on Strafford and Laud deserved elbow room. The wealth of thought which he—and the wealth of factual study which Church—put into an article was usually in excess of what periodicals either desire or deserve.

But it is partly that richness which gives to these pieces of Tractarian journalism more than a passing importance. Almost every one of the long articles which Church wrote at Oxford suffers constructionally by being discursive. The scholar gets in the way of the journalist; and, at some point and somehow, the critic is sure to overtop both. The result was not always a success. Of his review of Audin's *Leo X* it must be said that, amongst a mass of historical information, quoted mainly for purposes of exposure, there is scarcely anything of Church's own to give it distinction. Much more typical and rewarding is an essay, which appeared in 1850 (but was not included in the reprinted collection) on Church and State.* Despite being a strange hybrid between a treatise and a manifesto, it succeeds as an appeal to reality. The hybrid nature of this and other of Church's writings is, in itself, by no means a detriment. It is a characteristic of creative authorship in the religious field to overstep the categories. (St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans would not qualify to be considered either a balanced work of theology or a successful sample of letter-writing.) And we may say that as with Newman so with Church: he produced the sort of article proper to one writing in a crisis who is both a man of letters and a man of God. The important thing is that, amidst the sort of weaknesses which we have noted as to form, there exists in Church's early writings an element that deserves to survive.

* See below, pp. 106-7.

II. ST. ANSELM

Something quite fresh impelled Church to try his hand at original writing. We must not be surprised therefore to find that he put a lot of himself into the two articles, 'St. Anselm and Rufus' and 'St. Anselm and Henry I'. They form a single piece and will be referred to in this chapter simply as *St. Anselm.**

The reasons for the youthful strain of indignation and hero-worship which gives this work its pervading tone, and marks it as being no ordinary academic exercise, are not far to seek. By 1842 the Tractarian struggle at Oxford saw Church a marked man in the University. Since June of the previous year, when he resigned his Tutorship at Oriel in support of Tract 90, he had been fully committed as the friend and ally of Newman. He informed his mother, in a letter dated 12 November 1842, that he was hard at work on the life of Anselm 'who was a very great man in the eyes of people a long while ago, but has been shelved a good while now, for having had the misfortune to be a monk and a papist'. By recording 'to the nineteenth century the sort of cat-and-dog life of an Archbishop of Canterbury in the eleventh', this ardent Puseyite—then in his twenty-eighth year, and getting a first taste of what it is to be ostracized—was able to hold up a classic example of that painful lot which in times of crisis falls to the righteous in this naughty world. Moreover, friends and enemies alike might be shown, from the medieval struggle of Anselm against two Norman despots, that behind the contemporary efforts of the 'Apostolicals' in the

* Under that title Church brought the two essays together for Macmillan in 1870. Before that, they had been reprinted in his *Essays and Reviews* after first appearing in the *British Critic* in the January and July numbers of 1843. They were 'reviews' only in name, the titles of Möller's and Bouchitte's studies being merely referred to in a footnote and so providing Church with a pretext to launch out on the subject in his own way.

The *St. Anselm* of 1870, it should be noted, was a drastic rewriting which cost Church a lot of trouble. 'Doing *Anselm* a second time', he confided to a friend, 'was rather tiresome work. The getting it up was almost as troublesome as the first time, without the zest of a new subject. But I am glad I have done it because I think the character deserves it.' He felt the need to consult the latest authorities and prune away former exuberances. The faults of arrangement and form which marred the original production were certainly removed; but so, alas, was the white-hot temper which gave it a distinction of its own. (*Life and Letters*, 192.)

Oxford colleges there was an old and quite considerable principle at stake.³

Out of what looked like a tedious and petty squabble there would emerge, too, the lineaments of a saint as he actually lived. The scholar from Aosta who became Archbishop of Canterbury was, for personal reasons, a happy choice of subject. Church himself, being at that time strongly moved by the claims of holiness as Newman was presenting them, obviously saw in the Prior of Bec, who succeeded Lanfranc, a hero after his own heart. This teacher of Latin theology, with a circle of students about him, had found in the community life of the monastery a deep satisfaction for his spirit. But above all he had found it, with an aspiration since rediscovered by the Tractarians, 'in those services of unwearied praise and prayer, and those opportunities of self-recollection, by which men were permitted in those days to realize, in so vivid a manner, the Communion of Saints, and the presence of the Invisible'.⁴

Indeed, it is possible and not very precarious to see in Church's *St. Anselm* a number of apt parallels to the Oxford Movement. He describes, as if from experience, the beginnings of the rift when a great trial of strength is opening between 'opposite principles, which have been for some time silently growing up together in society'. 'The war begins with skirmishes about petty posts, with disputes about trifles, and quarrels seemingly personal . . . until issues show themselves more distinctly' and the main battle is finally joined. Again, may we not discern in the unhelpful bunch of bishops, who stood aside while Anselm was fighting the battle of the Church, a similarity to the bishops of the Tractarian era, moderate and peaceful men trying to evade the challenge or unable to 'make up their minds to a life of conflict'? On one point it is very tempting to draw a direct parallel, and perhaps the more so if the writer was betrayed to pen it unconsciously. The ordeals of leadership into which Newman was entering had been experienced by Anselm centuries before. 'Himself the greatest sufferer, all looked to him to receive their complaints, to keep up their spirits, to throw himself into their difficulties, and point a clear way out of them. Distrust, irritation, perplexity, all found their way to his ears. The sufferings and scandals of the day were all laid at his door—thrown in his teeth by

ill-nature, gossip or impatient zeal.' And may we be very bold and see, in Anselm's friendship with Gundulf, something like Church's own relation to the Vicar of St. Mary's at the time he was beginning to withdraw from the wearisome debate? For Anselm's great comfort during his years of exile was the steady attachment of Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester. 'He was not', writes Church, 'a man to take a lead or throw much weight into either scale in a contest like the present; but in him the archbishop had a friend who had long loved and revered him—in whom he could place most explicit confidence.'⁵

All told, we are safe in saying that for those Oxford men who were taking the unpopular line in the Puseyite struggle in the 1840's, the Investiture controversy of the medieval Church had a living relevance. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that these articles on Anselm's resistance to Rufus and Henry I were virtually Tracts for the Times in biographical dress.

They open, indeed, with a vigorous attack upon the Whig interpretation of history as it concerns the Church. Rationalistic historians like Hume and Robertson are roundly accused of emptying the spirit out of what should be the magnificent story of the Christianizing of our nation. There had been a conspiracy of secular philosophers to 'speak as they might of a great heathen empire; as if the most august and awful object in history, the Christian Church, deeply involved too as its fortunes have been with those of our own country, had no existence, or were but a mere title or abstraction'. And (cries this new writer in his first appearance before the public) Christians and churchmen—besides having themselves 'consented to receive as oracles the dicta of the unbeliever and the cold-hearted *littérateur* on the duties and objects of man and society, and listen with obsequious patience, while they superciliously gave judgement on the temper and relations of the Church and the conduct of her prelates'—have also allowed their children to be nurtured upon infidel assumptions in the books used at school. 'The household traditions of England', he declares, 'are now to be found, not in ballads and chronicles, but in the assemblage of unpretending little volumes . . . some of which are to be met with in most nurseries and juvenile libraries in the United Kingdom. We have all of us been once familiar with them . . .

bound in a sort of official livery . . . prim and starched little skeleton compilations, the very essence of propriety and dryness, carefully starving as far as they can, all appetite for the grand, or poetical or romantic', and presented with all the infallibility of a statistical report.⁶

After this uncompromising onslaught, Church proceeds to the contention that saints deserve to be treated no longer as pious figures *in vacuo* but as flesh-and-blood persons who had to fight for the Faith in 'the rough and dusty encounters of this (outwardly) very matter-of-fact and unromantic world'. So the reader is brought to see Anselm, unwillingly appointed Archbishop of Canterbury and thrown into sordid conflict with a brutal monarch and the whole political machinery from which he drew his power. The point at issue, says Church (as he exposes the purpose to which feudal vassalage had been put), was whether high-placed Christians 'when entrusted by God with the temporal government of their fellow-Christians, acquired thereby a certain right of exemption from obedience to the Christian law to which their brethren were bound, and a control over the powers and sanctions by which that obedience was to be enforced'. History books had long familiarized the modern Englishman with the corruptions of the pre-Reformation Church. Here, in 1843, it was suggested to him that there had been a time when the stink of corruption came in fact from the State. It had required an archbishop to be the champion of justice and morality against tyranny. Such a man did not earn the title of saint simply by being harmless. Nor was it ecclesiastical prejudice that had elevated him.⁷

Anselm presented a figure worthy to be revered by all good men. In this portrait his stature gains as we are reminded of his complete success in two very different rôles—as the profound metaphysical scholar, author of those monumental thought structures, the *Monologium* and *Proslogium*; and at the same time the spearhead of the Church party in the West over the Investiture struggle. But it is the essential man in Anselm to which Church unerringly penetrates. For this 'fellow-champion of Hildebrand and Becket, the mate and rival of our Norman kings', well as he acquitted himself in great public affairs, is seen to draw his strength from an altogether interior source:

he never changed the character which he had formed in his days of peace. He always continued to look on his vocation in the world as that of the theologian and the ascetic. In the very tug and crisis of the battle, when standing face to face with what we call the realities of life, a man of business and action as he seemed, he was still in reality the devout and enthusiastic metaphysician. In the hall at Rockingham, or the cloister at Canterbury, or the palace of the Lateran—journeying along the ‘rugged and ruinous ways’ to Italy—as well as in his Campanian monastery, with its mountains and sweet cool air, his thoughts without effort disengaged themselves from those absorbing interests which seemed at stake, to ‘fly back to their sacred and remembered spring’—the deep things of God and the soul. To the last, on his death-bed, it was evident that he considered it his especial work to unravel and communicate high and difficult truths. Nor was he wrong. He was not a statesman, but a monk. The secret of his victory—of his high and noble bearing in the world—of his dignity and self-possession—of his clear-sighted decision—of his firmness and readiness—of that unbroken calm which seemed in so undefinable a way to be about him—the secret of all this lay not in any unusual proportion of those powers which enable men of the world to charm or overawe their fellows, but in his thorough earnestness and self-devotion; in that completeness of character which by dint of continual and genuine self-mastery, has become fitted for every kind of service, because it has really surrendered every end but one.⁸

Ranged against this simple man we are shown the forces and personalities with which he had to contend—the cunning and brutal Rufus, the even more formidable because more subtle Henry Beauclerc. In resisting the Conqueror’s sons Anselm was pitting himself against a mighty wave of energy, concentrated in ‘a race whose banners, in the eleventh century, had been seen in almost every country round the Mediterranean —*gens fere orbem terrarum bello pervagata*—who had met and humbled alike Greek and Latin emperors, soldans of Syria and Africa, and had set up their thrones east, west and south—in Russia and England, in Naples, Palermo, and Antioch; at once the unscrupulous persecutors of the Church and its most enthusiastic liegemen and soldiers’. We are taught nowadays to suspect the picturesque in historians, but the exuberant passages in this essay need no apology. It was the avowed purpose of the writer to ignite the imagination of his Anglican brethren

who had too long been cool and sedate about the inheritance won for them in the Catholic past. As he coloured the description of Rufus and Henry, Flambard and Hugh le Loup, he did so with something of the religious purpose which has made Belshazzar so vivid in the Book of Daniel and Antiochus Epiphanes in the First Book of the Maccabees. He was writing to put heart into a resistance movement.⁹

But if Church's *St. Anselm* is not to be judged primarily as historical scholarship, it does stand out as a minor landmark in the treatment of ecclesiastical history. The Investiture controversy is here lifted out of its sealed compartment in the academic records, and so handled as to open men's eyes to the fact that the struggle between Church and State is a live issue. In every age where Christians retain their sense of religious reality there is a continuation of the same tension which always has existed, since the times of the Old Testament, in some form. The eleventh-century archbishop could, in Church's presentation, be shown to concern the nineteenth century in more ways than one. For those who, with Keble and Newman and Pusey, had been reawakened to the true nature of Christ's Church, the authoritative stand taken up by Anselm was an inspiration and a precedent. He shone in their eyes as the representative of that divine, Apostolic Society whose powers had been delegated to it from the Lord Himself. 'It was a *real* and *visible Kingdom*; distinct from the kingdoms of this world and independent of them, as well when embracing as when confronting them; with objects and ends, over all earthly ones, paramount.' History so treated bore testimony to the Tractarian cause.¹⁰

But there was an ancient debt, long overdue, to be acknowledged. Rulers like Rufus and Henry might easily have crushed an archbishop, no matter how saintly, but for his ability to appeal to the Pope. It is at this point that Church does service to the cause of historical truth by an assault upon the long-established line of Protestant and anti-clerical prejudice. The Papacy, he points out, was in the early Middle Ages the one effective bulwark against tyrannical rulers, the guardian of justice and human rights. It is not, he insists, 'a matter of theory or doctrine, but a fact of history, that in the time of which we speak, the cause of the Popes was that of religion and holiness. With whatever amount of mistake, misdoing or corruption

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among its supporters—however feebly they may often have realized their own principles—it was based on faith in the Unseen; it resisted and rebuked the world; it set a true value on the things of time.^{11*}

All this has a real, though indirect, bearing upon the revival of Christian social witness. *St. Anselm* serves to emphasize the moral authority of the Church over organized life and government. It is the first of a number of biographical studies in which the author shows his fine perception of the power of justice at work in history. His passages on this theme always have a convincing ring about them. In this way, because his readers belonged mostly to the governing class, Church had a healthy influence to exert. He was a potent if unobtrusive agent in creating amongst such people a sensitiveness without which social legislation would not have been so readily evolved. Before the Christian Socialists could speak in the name of religion to demand changes, there needed to be a rehabilitation of the doctrine of the supreme authority of the Church as the arbiter of what is right for man in this world. From Church's essay, *St. Anselm*, to T. S. Eliot's play, *Murder in the Cathedral*, there is a direct line of development in the thinking of churchmen. If the connexion with Eliot's *Idea of a Christian Society* is not so obvious, it is nevertheless implied. Indeed, it can be said that the Archbishop who presided at the Malvern Conference in 1940, and later proclaimed political and economic problems to be a concern of the Church, was in true succession with that earlier Archbishop who stood up to Rufus at Rockingham in 1095. The issue was whether, in one case, the feudal, and in the other the financial, magnates of the age should—on a technical pretext—consider themselves exempt from the law of Christ. By bringing Anselm to the notice of modern English Christians, Church was helping to prepare the Anglican mind for the emergence once more of true lords spiritual, who—upon some vital issue—will, like William Temple, rise up before the nation with the moral authority of their office. And, looking beyond England in his own day, the modern reader can see the relevance of all this to the persecution suffered by Roman

* His admiration for the Papacy as it had once been was more fully expressed by Church in April 1881 when he wrote on Gregory I in the *Church Quarterly*. (Reprinted in his *Miscellaneous Essays*, 1888.)

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Catholic bishops on the Continent in their resistance to Communism. But, wherever the struggle may be, something like the handing on of a torch connects it with the St. Anselm whom this Tractarian saw as a type of the authentic religious hero. ‘Two kings tried their strength against the Church; for more than ten years they did their best to beat down the cause upheld mainly by the conscience and fortitude of one old man.’¹²

This vision of the function of the Church in the world, this glorying in the splendour of Catholicism as represented by the witness of a true saint, is a measure of the inspiration which Church derived from his association with Newman. *St. Anselm* is indeed a monument to what the Oxford Movement through such a leader could call forth. But even in this first flight of his religious imagination, before ever the crash of the Movement came, Church had laid hold upon principles from which his master was unable to draw any practical strength when the test came. Achievements of the spirit—so he concludes—have first to be purchased, in the ecclesiastical field, by persistence against political odds. And then, having been reached amidst all manner of treacheries and setbacks, they are not immune from an aftermath of compromise and surrender. Yet history is like that and we must not quarrel with our lot. If virtue has no guarantee of permanent results, what is that to us? Anselm’s was not a success story:

Through what was romantic and what was unromantic in his fortunes; whether the contest showed in its high or low form—as a struggle ‘in heavenly places’ against evil, before saints and angels, with the unfading crown in view—or as a game against cowardly selfishness and the intrigue of courts; cheered by the sympathies of Christendom, by the love and reverence of crowds which sought his blessing, or brought down from his height of feeling by commonplace disagreeables, the inconveniences of life—dust, heat and wet, bad roads and imperialist robbers, debts and fevers, low insults and troublesome friends—through it all, his faith failed him not: it was ever the same precious and ennobling cause, bringing consolation in trouble, giving dignity to what was vexatious and humiliating.

It was her own fault if the Church gained so little by the compromise, and by so rare a lesson. In one sense, indeed, what is gained by any great religious movement? What are all reforms, remedies, restorations, victories of truth, but protests of a minority—efforts, clogged and incomplete, of the good and the brave, just

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enough in their own day to stop instant ruin—the appointed means to save what is to be saved, but in themselves failures? Good men work and suffer, and bad men enjoy their labours and spoil them: a step is made in advance—evil rolled back and kept in check for a while only to return, perhaps, the stronger. But thus, and thus only, is truth passed on, and the world preserved from utter corruption.¹³

III. FAITH AND THE MEDIEVAL

After this notable début came a pamphlet *Life of St. Wulstan* in 1844. It would be almost too slight to notice except for the light it throws upon the characteristic way in which Church, even when Newmanism was at its height, maintained his sense of proportion.

He was one of those, including James Anthony Froude, who were asked to contribute to a series of 'Lives of the English Saints' which Newman was bringing out. The purpose, Froude tells us, 'seemed to fall in with the theory of the continuity of the medieval and the existing English Church. The great names upon the Calendar belonged not to Rome but to us; they were part of our national history. . . . We were free to write as we pleased, each on his own responsibility.' But the future historian of the Protestant cause in the Tudor Reformation found himself disgusted with the incredible plethora of legends which he encountered in the hagiography of the Middle Ages.¹⁴

Now the author of *Eminent Victorians*, in dealing with Cardinal Manning, was glad to light upon this hint and use it as a morsel of the ludicrous to place before his readers. Mentioning the series—and naming *St. Wulstan* as one of the titles—he took occasion to say how scandalized the public were to learn 'that St. Ninian had turned a staff into a tree, that St. German had stopped a cock from crowing, and that a child had been raised from the dead to convert St. Helier'. It was, as Lytton Strachey remarks, the astounding credulity of Newman himself which gave the impetus to this parade of the supernatural. What he did not observe, however, is that at least one of the contributors quietly took a line of his own which, in the light of his future development, marked him off significantly both from the scornful Froude and from the beloved but superstitious leader who, at that time, had become a recluse at Littlemore.

Church encountered no soul-shattering difficulties over the miracles of St. Wulstan. However incredible they might be, his own reservations as a nineteenth-century Christian were subordinated to a sense of history sympathetic to the outlook of the period he was treating. He saw Wulstan as the representative of a subject race, a hero of the poor at a time when the life of this world was reasonable enough only from the Norman point of view. Popular feeling in England after the Conquest, quite understandably, demanded canonization and supplied a wave of credulity which is almost pathetic. 'It is well known,' remarked Church, 'from the strong censures of St. Anselm and others, how the devotion and love of the Anglo-Saxons clung fondly to the tombs of those whom in life they had seen to be venerable and noble; but towards Wulstan their countryman and townsman, known among them for more than sixty years as the best and holiest man in Worcester, known also in foreign parts, in France and Italy, and to the Pope himself—the last bishop given them by the holy king Edward, and the last of their ancient hierarchy—it is not strange that these feelings should have displayed themselves in the most intense degree.' Concerning the saint, therefore, Church thought it a just conclusion to say—'whether he did these miracles, or they were only reported of him, so he lived and so he died, that men readily believed them of him'.¹⁵

Thus quoted, the 'Lives of the Saints' do not provide quite so much to snigger about. In fact, to catch your less eminent Victorian you sometimes need to be up in a morning.

Church's imaginative attitude to the past was, however, rewarded about this time by first-hand evidence that the medieval mind still survived. A few weeks' holiday with Frederic Rogers during the Long Vacation of 1844 first drew forth his powers as a travel writer, and led to the 'Brittany' article which appeared in the *Christian Remembrancer* in January 1846. A picture comes to mind of peaceful August sunshine and two young dons 'travelling in a country cabriolet from Lannion, through Morlaix—quaint, grotesque feudal towns with such street architecture that Rogers's pencil has never ceased going all day'; and we find Church writing down impressions which characterize him as being, at this period, a true

child of the Romantic Movement. Here was a dark unmodernized region where medieval customs and pagan superstition lingered on to fascinate the civilized European. The Bretons were a Celtic race, retaining strange vestiges of ancient evil in their Christianized outlook. A mixture of what he had read as well as seen caused Church to declare:

Paganism has scarcely yet been quite rubbed out from among them—the religion of the wells, and woods, and heaths, and shores. The tall ghost-like stone on the moor still fills the peasant with supernatural awe, though the cross has been set upon it. . . . Idolatry is now gone; but wild, fearful ideas about the invisible world still linger, and belief in the mystic powers of nature, mixed up with Christian legends. It is on the western coast that these superstitions, solemn everywhere in Brittany, are most dreary and terrible; that coast which looks out on the desolate ocean—‘la proue de l’ancien monde’—and shares its gloom and storm. Even on the stillest day there is a sullen savage look about the scene, about the gaunt, dark rocks, the long, low sandy islands in the hazy distance, the heavy, sleeping balancing of the endless waters in their bed, *immensi tremor Oceani*. ‘Who has ever passed along this funereal coast without exclaiming or feeling, *Tristis usque ad mortem?*’ Every cape and island has its associations of terror or death; fit place for the *Nekvía* of the *Odyssey*—the refuge of the spirits of darkness whom the Gospel had scared from Greece and the East—the abode of the weird virgins, who ruled the tempests; the birth-place of Merlin; the haunt of mermaids and sea-monsters, and, in later times, of wreckers.¹⁶

The travellers were in time to attend a *pardon*, or village wake, held in the church of La Forêt near Landerneau and displaying all the traditional colour of old Breton life—costume, dance, procession, mime and song—preserved as a living part of the Catholic culture of a still-agrarian people. But, alas, reflects the amateur journalist, the Paris newspaper is on the way and soon French prose will smother the poetry of all this. For, as yet (he notes), Brittany is a specimen of the old world where rhythm comes naturally and people, in response to an occasion, must chant or sing. ‘Poetry is there in its earliest state, before it has become a literature, or a luxury, or the voice of individual feeling or genius.’ Hymns, ballads and love songs pour forth from village tailors and schoolmasters as well as young seminarists. ‘After a time it may be printed; but its home is in the voices and memories of the peasants. The blind

beggar goes from *pardon* to *pardon*, like the old *ραψωδός*, and stands by the church reciting his poem on the birth of Jesus Christ, which it takes him a whole day to get through.' And, in this as in all else, the Bretons were a people conscious of being Christians, ready at every turn to acknowledge their dependence upon God. 'Even the brute creation is brought within the hallowed circle—they have to fast with men on Christmas-eve, and they receive a blessing of their own from the Church: the very dogs, when they are sick, have a patron saint.'¹⁷

A glimpse of this was not calculated to make a thoughtful Englishman complacent about the enlightened state of his own nation or of European civilization in general where 'nothing but the present world is assumed and referred to, in the forms and language of ordinary intercourse; where society is ever silent about God, and nothing that men do or say in their usual business, implies His existence'. Indeed England, trusting in the beneficence of steam power and already degrading a large part of its manhood into slum-dwellers, had scope for reflection in the portrait of human dignity which Church saw in the typical Breton peasant:

The eldest born of the races of France, he has a strong feeling of the honours of years and ancient blood: he is the old *noblesse* among the French peasantry. . . . Yet with them the pride of the Celt is deeply hidden; it does not show itself in anything petty, in any small peevishness, or uneasy watchfulness after small slights. It is dignified, almost unconscious—it pervades the man; and, when it appears, it explodes. Their blood is as good as the gentleman's, and so is their faith; and while the gentleman is just, the peasant is content with his lower place in the world: but the gentleman must not interfere with what God has appointed, or with what the peasant thinks his due. No one can, on occasion, hate the gentleman with deeper, bloodier hatred, than the old-fashioned royalist peasant. He is at once aristocratic and republican; too proud not to recognize gentle blood and superiority in others; too proud, also, to do so slavishly. . . . Nor will he defile himself with the low toil and base gains of the artisan. His thoughts and his works are about that where man's art stops short, and the mysterious unseen Hand only works, without labour or stint; with the old, sacred, benignant earth, which rewards, but does not traffic; with his own peculiar plot of ground, and the masterless sea; the pasture and the corn field, and the sea-weed on the beach. Careless about the works of his own hands, and rugged

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in his skill, he rejoices in the gifts which come perfect and immediate from God, and by which his life is nourished. He ploughs, he reaps, he threshes the grain, in the spirit and gladness of patriarchal faith; as it is his labour, so is it his chief joy in life.¹⁸

Confronted with a way of life so deeply rooted in the seignorial tradition, the two friends had to return from their holiday to an England where industrial development and Liberal doctrines presented a very different picture. Did it oppress them to think that modern Europe, increasingly sophisticated and faithless, compared ill with what remained of the older world? Should not the logic of things have taught every disciple of Newman that, weighed in the scale of Catholic conviction, the medievals were right and the moderns wrong? To secure the life of faith might it not be but a small price to renounce the doubtful developments of recent centuries, and bid farewell to the vaunted achievements of the contemporary human mind?

Such thoughts may have occurred to Church. Reverence for the virtues and cultures of other times, other people, and other places was always strong in him. Yet, however critical of abuses and stupidities at home, he never showed any sign of disparaging the Church or nation or intellectual inheritance to which he belonged. He had, moreover, in Rogers, a travelling companion whose weight could be relied upon to come down on the side of plain loyalties learned in England, rather than some romantic idea picked up from abroad.

IV. FOUNDING THE GUARDIAN

So far the writings of Church breathed the militant spirit of Hurrell Froude. That spirit, imbibed at second-hand through Newman, had in *St. Anselm* given vent to an anti-Erastian challenge such as Froude contemplated in his unfinished study of Becket. Amongst the Bretons a prompting of the same spirit had moved Church to hold up, as a rebuke to rationalistic civilization, a sample of primitive Catholic culture. But the year 1845 marked the end of such dogmatic confidence. Henceforth Church wrote as one who, while adhering to his old principles, recognized a whole world of new truths to which partisans taken up with the Oxford Movement had been oblivious.

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The withdrawal of Newman threw him, at a critical time, into closer sympathy with the man who had known Froude personally but not been intoxicated by his extremism. Rogers was, without doubt, aware of that counsel of Hurrell Froude's to another young friend—'When you go to London you will be among a parcel of liberals in religion and politics, and ought to expect to find it infectious. Take care you don't get sucked in.' Something of the Churchman's necessary 'recollectedness' never deserted Rogers. But, living at Blackheath with chambers in the Temple, and later working at the Colonial Office, he could hardly be expected to wrap his intellectual skirts about him and treat civilized society as an infection. It was precisely amongst 'a parcel of liberals' that he had to live his life and do his work. And through him Church came at regular intervals into the same swim. It is therefore not surprising that the two friends became pre-eminently 'cross-bench' men whose Tractarian loyalties were modified in the light of changing times.¹⁹

They were drawn together by a common bent for journalism. That in itself indicated a drift from the straitest sect of the Movement. Church's propensity for putting vividly on paper the impressions he got, for instance, of scenes in Brittany—and rather different 'scenes' in Oxford—exposed him to the risk of being considered somewhat frivolous. Keble in his heart of hearts disapproved such flights of talent, even though he might not have hurt a friend's feelings by saying so. Any taste which Pusey may once have had for the sights of this world was sternly put aside with other gentlemanly amenities after his wife's death. But Rogers, besides being a wit, could appreciate the abilities of his friend as an amateur journalist because he himself had entered the professional field. While in London reading law he had met Mr. John Walter in 1842 and been engaged to write leaders for *The Times*. He was more than successful for, in the course of two years, he produced a quiet but very real revolution in the tone of the old 'Thunderer'. His leaders never deviated from the Anglican standard of restraint which he set himself to observe. While adopting the satirical line to deflate bounciness, he also made it his business to strike a blow for the 'good cause' whenever he could. This experience convinced Rogers of the service that might be done to religion if a new kind of weekly for High Churchmen could

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be set going. The shock sustained by their loss of Newman made it seem imperative in 1845 to 'shake out a standard and seem not discouraged'. So the *Guardian* made its first appearance (at the same time as the *Daily News*) on 21 January 1846.

Church was one of the four whom Rogers records as having entered with him into the original consultation about the venture. They made themselves responsible for the writing and for finding the necessary capital. The amateur nature of the enterprise made it all the more romantic and gallant. 'We took the somewhat bold resolution', says Rogers, 'of starting the paper ourselves, dealing directly with the printer and with Haddan's clerk as ostensible publisher and sub-editor. We made an agreement with some printers in Little Pulteney Street, and hired a room opposite the printing establishment, over the shop of a baker, where we could attend or meet to see what was going on, and where some of us spent the greater part of every Tuesday night correcting proofs, rejecting or inserting matter, writing articles on the last subjects which had turned up, giving last touches, and generally *editing*. Bernard, Haddan and I, being in London, must, I suppose, have done most of this work, but Church and Mozley used to take their share, making use of a bedroom in my lodgings in Queen Street, Mayfair, whither I had migrated from the Temple. To these lodgings we used sometimes to return at four or five in the morning—sometimes, perhaps, later; for I connect some of these returns home with the smell of bread hot from the oven, on which I think we sometimes made our breakfast.'²⁰

Amongst the very first issues of the paper—21 January, 4 and 25 February 1846—there appeared a review by Church of Carlyle's *Cromwell*. It is pungent and anything but friendly to Carlyle. The literary position of the Scottish sage can hardly be said to have been impaired either by this onslaught or that of Mozley a few months later.* But what Church says of the

* On the historical issue, however, Carlyle's iconoclastic attitude to the Catholic aspect of religion was bound to call forth retaliation. Newman had declined to review his *French Revolution* because he thought the writer an infidel (*J. B. Mozley: Letters*, 119n.). Acton considered him detestable as an historian and alleged that he had 'invented' Oliver Cromwell. As for the Protector himself, J. R. Lowell's *bon mot* was probably thought to have dismissed him with the perfect blend of wit and malice and truth. In a discussion as to the propriety of erecting a statue to him in Westminster Abbey, he suggested that Oliver had earned a place, if not amongst the sovereigns, at least 'among the half-crowns'. (*Acton, Letters*, 5.)

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book and its author is worth noting. ‘In the French Revolution he dealt with men: he faced and portrayed realities. Here he has an ideal to reconcile with facts, and he does not succeed so well. . . . Mr. Carlyle’s own idea does not rise of itself out of his documents: he has to protect and foster it. There is a painful effort, a monotonous impatient bluster, to keep up the reader’s heroic mood.’ The new critic roundly denies that any case has been made out for regarding Cromwell as a hero. It is not that he fears for Anglicanism. ‘No really great cause ought to be afraid of the fact of having had a great man for its enemy. In the mixed order of the world there is nothing wonderful in such an antagonist being matched against it. He is an overwhelming witness against a hollow cause, but not against a true one.’ Was Cromwell anything better than a military tyrant, powerful to destroy but too negative to leave behind any ‘trace of himself in the character and serious thought of England’? And what can Carlyle show us in this hero but ‘mere bigness’ with a sort of ‘Cyclopean one-eyed strength of character . . .’? ‘Gulliver in Lilliput, stung by the little people, able to crush, but not to govern, is no fit type of a great ruler of men.’²¹

Church no doubt enjoyed those rollicking clouts which he delivered upon the head of the Philistine from Ecclefechan. This review of *Cromwell* is evidence that he had the party marks clearly, and not unattractively, upon him. It was calculated to please the High Church feelings of those amongst whom the new paper could be expected to get its main support.

But the *Guardian* stood for the fact that such partisanship was not enough. The very way the paper had started meant that, in every sense, Anglicanism was leaving Oxford for London. When Church and Mozley attended the chambers of Thomas Henry Haddan at 6 New Square, Lincoln’s Inn, to assist in bringing this new journal to the birth they found no other clergymen there—except Arthur West Haddan, brother of the convener, and a former curate at St. Mary’s under Newman. The dominant three amongst the founders were laymen and lawyers; for as well as Rogers and Thomas Haddan there was Mountague Bernard who became Professor of International Law and Diplomacy, and Fellow of All Souls. In drawing Church into this sort of group Rogers encouraged the development

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of his intellect in a non-clerical direction. His readiness to meet scientific inquiry was made clear in the review which Church wrote for the *Guardian* (18 March 1846) on a sequel to *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*—a much-discussed but anonymous book about what was later called ‘Evolution’. Indeed he was perhaps the decisive force in enabling the controllers of the new paper to arrive at a clear and enlightened editorial policy. Although it favoured High Church principles the *Guardian* repudiated what is called ‘old-womanism’ and disclaimed all intention of being a ‘religious newspaper’ in the sense of one which ‘discusses and pronounces upon purely religious questions as its direct and proper material’. A leading article in the issue of 25 November 1846 put the case very strongly by comparing such a paper to the phenomenon which would be presented by ‘a preaching member of Parliament—by an astronomer who should demonstrate by an appeal to moral and religious axioms—or by a playwright, or novelist, who should make his characters talk nothing but controversial divinity’. Instead of ‘merging the journalist in the theologian’, it would be the policy of the *Guardian* to remember that ‘The primary province of a newspaper is discussion—of events as they pass’. The drawing of inferences in the political, social, literary, scientific, and religious fields would only be proper when some principle arose incidental to current events.

The paper, which threatened to founder in the first months of its existence, survived and grew to be for a long period the equivalent of what would now be expected of a weekly edition of *The Times*, complete with Parliamentary and foreign news, shipping, trade and police reports, as well as book reviews and columns of influential correspondence. Writing for such a journal proved entirely congenial to Church. From 1846 up to 1871,* says Mary Church, ‘in addition to his weekly review for the *Guardian*, my father wrote one or more articles for the same paper on some political question of the day. A great number of the articles on the Crimean War, the Austro-Prussian War, the Eastern Question, the Greek and Italian and Roman Questions, were from his pen. During these years, except in his reviews, he seldom wrote on purely ecclesiastical subjects.’²²

* See below p. 182.

But in the summer of 1846 poor circulation indicated that there was no future for the paper. The educated classes, regarding it as a 'religious weekly', had not taken the trouble to look in such a quarter for any authoritative information on mundane subjects. Then—just when its fate appeared to be sealed—the stars in their courses fought for the *Guardian*. On 23 September a new planet, later called Neptune, was sighted by the Berlin Observatory. That, however, constituted no surprise in astronomical circles. Its exact position, within one degree, had been forecast by a French scientist three weeks before. Started off by a study of irregularities in the orbit of Uranus, he had been led to the conviction that this further planet must exist, hidden in the heavens, to account for such motions. Other mathematicians, including a young Cambridge man, were also working on similar data. So that when Neptune was actually viewed through the telescope the learned world was not quite sure whether to give the credit to Le Verrier or to Adams. In fact, after the Frenchman had made his claim, there appeared in the *Athenaeum* a letter from no less a person than Sir John Herschel which seemed to bring Adams's name forward as a rival who had been overlooked. In the midst of this tense situation the *Guardian*, on 14 October, printed an unsigned article entitled 'Le Verrier's Planet'. It was a surprisingly full, technical, and lucid account, explaining to the general reader precisely the steps taken in the scientific process of determining the existence and position of Neptune in advance, and quoting all the relevant authorities. The concluding sentence ran:

Calculations of the same nature may have been engaging the simultaneous attention of other mathematicians, but M. Le Verrier's claim to the honour of this achievement must always be paramount, because he first had such confidence in his theory as to announce it publicly, without qualification, and in the minutest expression, and to stake his credit on its verification.

The *Guardian* was also staking its reputation. For Church, in writing the article in such detailed and magisterial a way, had set himself up as knowing something of astronomical method. By seeming to challenge what Herschel had said at a recent meeting of the British Association he might have received in

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reply something warmer than the immediate gratitude of Le Verrier. He wrote rather elatedly therefore to Mozley on 23 October:

Sharpe and R[ogers] too are in great force about the *G[uardian]*. At last we have got quoted in a morning paper, *Daily News*, by help of Le Verrier's letter. We may be caught out in some floor, but if we are not, I shall be very proud of the planet all my life long.²³

And so he could be, for everything ended well. It was proved that Le Verrier had undoubtedly published his figures and conclusions first. Adams with noble modesty admitted the claim; and Herschel wrote explaining how an out-dated letter of his had created a wrong impression. He expressed generous regret for having caused such pain to a brother scientist in whose triumph Englishmen could rejoice without any jealousy that the honour of Neptune's discovery belonged to France.

If, by his contributions at this time and afterwards, Church proved himself to be the making of the *Guardian*, it may also be considered to have done something vital for his development. Writing for a public which was only in part clerical, he gave himself increasingly to subjects which (as the paper had said) were not of an essentially religious nature. In the Le Verrier article there did not occur any hint at all of theological considerations. Apart from the purpose of seeing a fine intellectual venture publicly vindicated, the whole thing had the character rather of an exposition in some up-to-date encyclopaedia. The one 'literary' passage is quite short and simply says:

The last and farthest of the planets, till lately, was supposed to be Uranus. But outside that which seemed to be the extreme verge of our system, it now appears that a mighty stranger, far exceeding Uranus in size, has been rolling in orbits of 217 years, unknown in its outer darkness, a Titan more vast and powerful than the oldest of the Gods, and whose blind but strong influence on the motions of Uranus, have at last betrayed his presence.

If there lurks any inference here, is it not that Church considered science to be possessed of a certain faith and poetry in its own right? The times he spent with Manuel Johnson at the Oxford Observatory, looking through his telescopes at Jupiter

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and Saturn, had presumably led to discussions and reading at a level sufficient to acquaint Church with what was going on in the astronomical world. Perhaps, then, it was a significant spot at which to say goodbye to Newman.

What degree of knowledge Church had does not make him a prodigy or any such thing. It simply is that, like Kingsley and others, though trained in the humanities, he had a serious respect for science. According to Liddon, he did some study of Physiological Histology at Christ Church. He apparently kept in touch with people on the 'natural history' side.* When the American botanist, Asa Gray, visited Oxford in 1851 to consult about plants—and was shown, incidentally, 'some fine talbotypes, which are a sort of daguerreotype on paper, and have a beautiful effect for landscapes and buildings'—Church breakfasted with him at Oriel in Pusey's old rooms. He also himself gave a dinner in honour of the visitor to a gathering of scientific friends in the Common Room. That occasion, small in itself, became the means of opening up to him in later years, through a life-long friendship, frequent glimpses of what Nature was beginning to mean to trained minds of first-class calibre.²⁴

V. 1847: MEDITERRANEAN TOUR

The humanist bent, awakened in Church by a study of history and drawn through journalistic occasions into the joyous world of literature and science, took its determinative plunge in 1847. After the strain of previous years he seized the opportunity to refresh himself physically and mentally by paying a prolonged visit to his uncle, Sir Richard Church, at Athens.

It meant, in every sense, a break-away. Early that year Pusey, in order to stem the growth of rationalism, contemplated the bringing out of a popular commentary on the Bible; and he later invited Church to undertake a portion of it. But Church, by a true instinct, never addressed himself to that or any other

* A curious little hint of this occurs in a footnote to *St. Cyril* at Lect. XVIII where a fabulous illustration, used by that Father in all good faith, calls forth from Church this comment: 'The existence of the Phoenix is believed by Tertullian, Epiphanius, &c., as well as by Clement; as was till a comparatively late date the doctrine of four elements, or of the motion of the sun round the earth. In like manner the existence of megatheria and ichthyosauri was not known till lately, nor the connexion between magnetism and electricity.' (Op. cit., 243n.)

directly theological task. No one, including Pusey, had stronger religious convictions or a deeper concern for Biblical Christianity. With him, however, the profane had claims to make as well as the sacred. His unworldliness, more severe at heart than that of most clerics in any generation, had a moral rather than an intellectual quality. He saw no reason to hate the outward appearance of this world even though it were but the antechamber of reality. Observant as a pagan poet, he had a flair for taking in the passing spectacle presented by people and places and events. The truth of this and the extent to which it moulded his thinking need to be clearly grasped. No one will be able to understand the man if there is any suggestion that the 'moral beauty' so much associated with Church's character implies something anaemic and vague. But it so happens that the best evidence of his all-round appetite of mind is concentrated into the record of what he saw and did in 1847. That is the one period of his life when we are permitted to get an almost continuous insight into the way he naturally let himself go. And for that reason it is worth special attention.

Church's account of his year of travel is vividly and crisply written. It runs to some sixty pages in the *Life and Letters*, and present-day facilities for seeing the Continent have not rendered it less interesting. For one thing, coming just within the first half of the century, even the descriptive scenes evoke most pleasantly for us the Europe of a vanished age. The *Ripon*, for instance, on board which Church left England in January, was herself a period piece. Besides steam-paddles she carried fore and main try-sails for use in a favourable wind. And Church, berthed aft in a cabin to himself, had the P. & O. luxury of being regaled with hot rolls for breakfast and champagne for dinner. He enjoyed being at sea. And no doubt he would have enjoyed it more but for the terrific storm which the unfortunate vessel encountered in the Bay of Biscay. But when they touched at Gibraltar there were geraniums, periwinkles, and roses in bloom to greet the battered voyagers, and all was green and fresh under a spring sky. He noted there the motley conglomeration of human types, and especially the Barbary Moors with bare legs and striped capotes, grinning at the doorways or lying on the ramparts in the sun like savage dogs. At Malta the rich architecture of Valetta's narrow streets delighted his eye.

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During the eleven days' stay of the ship the crowded city was illuminated for the annual festival commemorating the shipwreck of St. Paul, and he saw from his window the image of the Apostle carried in procession. Such were the first of many colourful impressions for Church as he tasted again, after twenty years, his native South.²⁵

The sort of grand tour proper to the Fellow of a college began when he reached Athens. It offered a centre of peculiar interest to one who, besides being familiar with classical literature, could also enjoy being a student of contemporary politics. Church combined the two rôles while staying at his uncle's residence under the north-east angle of the Acropolis. It was a curious house, situated in one of the narrow meandering streets, with bits of old sculpture stuck in the walls, an outside staircase, and windows looking into an enclosed court. Sir Richard had devised this abode for himself by adding a modern wing of two stories to the shell of an old Turkish tower. And there, true to his romantic experiences, he kept up a state of fortification as if expecting some assault. In the meantime his old retainers, living in the neighbourhood, rallied at the General's house to smoke a pipe and take coffee after dinner while engaging in political conversation. Greece prided herself on having a Parliament, and the strangely-attired and strangely-speaking assemblage, to whom Church found himself being introduced under his uncle's roof, were of the Opposition. As they sat in a circle 'talking very loud Greek, Italian and French, abusing the ministry and the present state of things, for two hours', he had an opportunity of noting both their opinions and their appearance. One veteran chieftain of the war, Demo Chelio, coming from the western mountains, wore a sheepskin cape with a white petticoat, or fustanella, leggings, and slippers. He was joined by a cultivated person of great fluency 'dressed in the extreme of the Parisian fashion, tight boots and lemon-coloured kid gloves'. A dandy of quite another cast displayed the native dress in all its colour and elegance—'a cloth jacket of red or blue or olive, richly embroidered with black lace, with loose sleeves opened all down the arm, and just fastened round it in two or three places; over this a waistcoat without sleeves still more richly embroidered, shirt and kilt of snowy whiteness, a rich shawl girdle, and red or blue leggings'.²⁶

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The character of the Greek people and their state of civilization, as well as the natural wildness of their surroundings, were revealed to Church more intimately in the course of his stay. He had dined once or twice with the British Minister, Sir Edmund Lyons, and with the Chaplain, Mr. Hills; he had viewed the famous sites of Athens itself and come to know it 'pretty nearly as well as I know Winchester'. After all this he thought it time to make expeditions further afield. The first of these took him south-west, through solitary country bright with wild flowers and broken by wooded ravines, to the extreme cape of Attica where stands the temple of Sunium. From there his route lay northwards up the east coast to Marathon. It meant travelling on horseback and being away some days; and because of the danger from *klephts*, or robbers, the General provided his nephew with an armed escort. A chief ranger of the government Woods and Forests acted as guide and had with him two of his men, 'fine-looking fellows of the Albanian cut, armed to the teeth with Turkish sabre, silver-mounted pistol and dagger and long gun'. Church became very fond of his 'guardia boschi' but had to converse with them by signs when his Italian and Greek failed. They on their part were most attentive to the wants of this strange Englishman who sketched mountains and ruins by day, wrote long letters each evening, and slept on a macintosh air-bed which they fought for the privilege to inflate.

With these companions Church rode into the plain of Marathon one day in March just as the sunset was casting a sickly gleam upon the distant headlands of Euboea out of a wild and gloomy sky: 'It was impossible to have seen the place under a better light; one which so well suited the strange, mysterious character of the old victory, which, even to the Greeks themselves, had something in it of the supernatural. We were benighted on the field, with the wind rising, and the sea breaking on the beach near us, where the Persian ships with Hippias moored. With some trouble, and amid the furious onslaught of shepherds' dogs, we found our way in the thick, dusky evening, to the demarch's house at Marathona; and here we were very hospitably and civilly received by the Greek family. The lady came in, after the first compliments had passed, with a tray of sweetmeats and a glass of some sort of

liqueur, and offered it gracefully as a kind of welcome.' Some days later, seeking shelter from the moorland hills after showery weather and snowstorms had dissuaded them from attempting Mount Parnes, the little party were glad to fare more roughly still. They entered a poor dwelling where, amongst crying children, the daughter was spinning and the mother kneading bread and watching the pot on the fire. Smoke found its way out through a hole in the roof and there were accidental holes as well 'for the refrigeration and humefaction of the inhabitants'. There, under the blackened rafters, took place a scene not unworthy to rank with those of Dr. Johnson in the Hebrides. A carpet was spread on the clay floor for the travellers to sit down, and Church squatted with the rest to eat his dinner—with fowls moving everywhere and the farm animals looking on from behind a rail at the other end of the one room. So were they entertained, without embarrassment on either side, in the home of the chief magistrate at the village of Kapandriti while 'the dignitary himself was out at work, most honestly getting his bread'.²⁷

In July, accompanied by the same escort, Church made a northern pilgrimage from Thebes to Delphi, crossing the lowlands of Boeotia and skirting the mountain regions of Helicon and Parnassus. But perhaps the most thrilling of his Greek tours was an expedition undertaken before that when he spent about a month in the Peloponnese. The General had been opposed to his nephew's attempting to reach Sparta because of the condition of the country. But there was in Athens another Englishman also keen to go, an architect called Penrose whom Church came across measuring up the Parthenon—and with whom years afterwards he was to become associated as cathedral surveyor at St. Paul's. After Easter the pair of them crossed to the Morea in a curious Greek vessel in which they were allotted 'a small cabin at the stern, with a picture of St. George and a lamp burning'; but (wrote Church) 'the fleas, who never hurt me, drove Penrose out of it to lie on the ballast. The Piraeus has four line-of-battle ships in it now, besides no end of brigs and schooners. We left on a beautiful still night, music playing, and lights glancing about on board our *Albion*, and the echoes of the evening guns rolling and thundering among the hills of Salamis.' From Aegina they made for Epidaurus, the Lourdes

of the ancient world. To add enchantment to the scenery, nightingales were in full song as they entered the sacred valley of Aesculapius. But the theatre ‘which drove Pausanius into raptures’ struck Church as a melancholy place, and they pushed on to reach Nauplia just as the evening bell and a sound of drums announced the closing of the city gates. After three days there they crossed the gulf to Astros, spent the night at an outlandish monastery, got their first memorable view of Taygetus, and finally reached Sparta. Their journey next took them through the plain of Messenia, across into Arcadia and so north to see the valley of the Styx, with its precipitous wonders, before turning towards Corinth for home.²⁸

This Peloponnesian excursion, however, had not been without mishap. The two travellers, having for escort this time only ‘an asthmatic peasant with a rickety old gun’, were riding up the slopes of Cyllene by Lake Phoniá when three or four armed *klephths* emerged from the wood and made them dismount. As a result of this hold-up Church and Penrose were left with their hands tied, and were only able to wriggle loose after the thieves had made off with two English watches, various other articles, and about ten pounds in cash. Though his nephew had escaped uninjured from that adventure, Sir Richard felt uneasy about this sort of thing. Moreover, the Greek elections were at hand and electioneering in some districts was liable to take an unconventional form. So, to obviate any risk of his venturesome relative being accidentally ‘canvassed’ he persuaded him to try safer sightseeing by making a trip by steamer to Constantinople.

The experience of being for the first time outside Christendom made Church a keen observer. Old Turkish ways still lingered in a city which was then tasting its first dose of Western garishness and vulgarity. If two or three factory chimneys shared with Santa Sophia the skyline of the Bosphorus, and if blue-uniformed policemen were seen in the streets, there were still the ‘veiled women, shovelling and sliding along in their yellow boots’; still the ‘truculent turban and beard, and stately bagging trousers’; and still ‘the great estate of the dogs, the free and independent dogs, who never get out of the way for man or horse’.

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They have begun to use horse carriages, and very properly have begun at the beginning. Not like the hasty Greeks of Athens, who have built on the model of the modern German calesse or French cabriolet; the Turkish coach builders have drawn their ideas, if not from the very earliest era of coach building, at least from the venerable days when the Lord Mayor's coach was a new-fangled invention. The form is of unexceptionable seventeenth-century shape; and gilding outside and plain boards within, give the coach its due grandeur and discomfort. Besides these, which I should think are parts of the European civilization which has begun to invade ancient Turkey, there are other conveyances, covered waggons drawn by oxen, of untainted Eastern fashion. It was a fine sight yesterday (Whit-Monday, a great holiday with the Christian population, and with the Jews in consequence, because they can make holiday under shelter of the Greeks and Armenians, without being snubbed by the Turks; so at least I was told) to see these arabas rolling sonorously along the road to the Sweet Waters—the Richmond or Greenwich Park of Constantinople—their grave dun oxen stepping along as majestically as if they were human Turks, each with an elastic arch of fringe and tassels of red and gold, rising and shaking over their backs (being fastened in front to the yoke and behind to their tails), the ponderous wagon itself stuffed with cushions, and fat Greek women, or sometimes smoking Greek men—who had to descend from their vehicle by steps like those of the old coaching days in England, by which outside passengers came down so tremulously by help of the gallantry of coachmen and ostlers. The Sweet Waters were pretty yesterday. The banks of the stream are shaded by fine trees, and spread into narrow green meadows between low hills; and under the trees were numerous parties ‘performing picnic’, as my guide accurately expressed it, squatted on mats and carpets on the river-side, half veiled Armenians, and crested Jewesses, and bareheaded or French bonneted Greeks, with a due proportion of boys and men of less characteristic dress, a few Turks smoking or lazily fishing, singers and guitar-players making a noise not unpleasant at a distance, a company of Bulgarians offering to dance to their bagpipes, and some gipsies and sellers of refreshments, one of whom earnestly recommended to my notice, as a genuine antique, a well-worn French sou of the Republic.²⁹

Amongst buildings Church was less struck by the mosques than by the marble octagons, rather like chantries, erected in the streets so that passers-by could look through the windows and see the tombs, each covered with a rich pall and a turban,

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beneath which the dead Sultans lie in state perpetually. He saw the dancing dervishes; visited the Seraglio and its gardens, and penetrated the courts and reception-rooms of the palace to find ‘a queer old library standing in the middle of a sort of cloister, about which lounged a lot of lazy pages of the Sultan’. Finally he nourished his historical imagination by a circuit—on foot and in a boat—of the ancient walls, the memory of which lent colour no doubt later on to his essay, ‘The Early Ottomans’. Of these walls he wrote at the time—‘They are, I believe, in the main, the work of the Byzantine emperors, in some few places repaired, but in most left to crumble by the Turks. A paved road follows their line towards the land. There was a triple line of them, with a ditch, which now supplies Constantinople with vegetables, and the road for a long way is flanked towards the country with a thick cypress grove with tombs. They are, at least, remains of the old Christian city, and have looked strange enemies in the face.’ This thought awakened in him a longing for Gibbon. Back at the Piraeus, he found a copy; and with it and the *Iliad* solaced himself during the eight days he had to spend in quarantine before returning to Athens.³⁰

In August he bade farewell to his uncle and made his way first to Corfu where he stayed for a week with Lord Seaton. From there he crossed to Italy and, despite the heat at that season, went sightseeing to Venice, Ravenna, and Bologna. He was summoned, however, to Lyons where his brother Charles—on his way out also to stay with the General—lay dangerously ill. Then, when Charles recovered, the pair of them drove through Avignon, Les Esterelles, Cannes, and Genoa to revisit their old home, Florence. At the close of 1847, when they finally parted, Charles went forward to Athens and, having struck up a friendship with Edward Lear, went with the artist on a short sketching tour which included one or two places—like Marathon and Thebes—which his brother had recently visited. But Richard himself returned to Genoa, took steamer to Marseilles, and crossed France to reach home again in the second week of the new year.

This period spent in leisurely wanderings had a happy effect upon Church, and may have been crucial to his development.

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Divergence from Newman was carried a further stage. We cannot but note the difference between Church's reactions as a traveller and those of his spiritually-tormented friend. It will be remembered how Newman's Mediterranean holiday with the Froudes had the effect both of intoxicating and horrifying him with its pagan associations, and how it culminated in that Sicilian ordeal of 1833 which formed (we are told) the psychological turning-point of his life. Church had reached about the same age and toured almost the same region—but more intimately and for a longer period. As one reared in Italy from infancy, he might have been expected to experience violent nostalgia at least. But in fact he noted everything, enjoyed everything, and returned to England apparently without any emotional disturbance to his being. The scenes through which he passed did not form for him, as they did for Newman, the setting for a personal drama of vocation. Nevertheless, it is clear from his subsequent attitude to various questions that 1847 settled for Church the Anglican line which he should henceforth pursue. What he wrote in the following year or two shows evidence of a mind being finally tempered for its task.³¹

And if the general effect of his holiday tour is to be looked for in the ripening of his religious sagacity, its very obvious and almost immediate result was to develop his political sense.

VI. POLITICAL LESSONS FROM ABROAD

Church's upbringing as a Tory found natural endorsement at Oxford. Whatever differences the colleges had, there was scarcely a taint of Radicalism amongst them. But political intrigue certainly held its recognized place in what was still largely a confraternity of clerics of the propertied class. And the Puseyites, no less than the other religious groups, busied themselves in devious ways to secure a man of their particular shade of Conservatism to represent the University in Parliament. In 1847 they had the luck to nominate in Gladstone a candidate whom others also decided to support. Gladstone, it was not forgotten, had come down from London to do battle on behalf of Newman's friends against the Hebdomadal Board in the 1845 crisis. That he should be returned in the elections two years later as the junior member for Oxford constituted a

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blow to the Heads of Houses whose candidate, Round, was defeated by some shrewd electioneering tactics on the part of the despised Tractarians. At the close of the campaign Northcote, Gladstone's lieutenant, sent him a report about the state of things in the University. Stanley, Jowett, and Temple were (he said) the great names in the Germanizing party, as they were called. But he thought perhaps Temple belonged, with Lake, rather to an intermediate position between these fashionable Broad Church intellectuals and the old High Church party whose 'Puseyism' had become rather a name of the past, though there were still Puseyites of importance. 'Marriott, Mozley and Church appear to be regarded as leaders; but Church, who is now abroad, is looked upon as something more, and I am told may be considered on the whole the fairest exponent of the feelings of the place.'³²

Church, being out of England, only heard of the election through the gleeful account sent to him by his friend, James Mozley. He was getting, besides other things, an education in Continental politics. At Athens, though ecclesiastical matters were not at all the main topic, he found in the religious arrangements of the State such anomalies as the Anglican Establishment could not match. The King, he observed, nominated the bishops; but, in spite of being a strong Roman Catholic, was married to a Protestant; was bound by the Constitution to bring up his children as members of the Greek Church; and had to attend the Greek services on certain days. But King Otho, through his puppet Minister, Coletti, was at that time attempting to subvert the Constitution, so newly and so hardly won, and bring in a despotism. Church was able to watch the Chamber of Deputies at work, and sent to Rogers an amusing description of the tactics employed there and the intrigues behind the scenes. Residing with the General, whose house was a stronghold of the Opposition, he found himself in the thick of a political row which his experience at Oxford helped him to savour with particular relish.

The difference of scene and dress is very soon got over, and the views of the Acropolis, and the rickety cabs driven below them by fierce moustached coachmen in red caps and white petticoats, do not move me more than St. Mary's and a Vice-Chancellor and pokers would do. But the company that I keep—quite, I assure

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you, the *élite* of Athens—is very different from all your people at Oxford. First, all my friends are strong Liberals, and I hear nothing but Liberalism all day long. No one here has any notion that an Englishman can be other than a Liberal; if he was not, he would be a sort of unintelligible contradictory monster, who by some accident had come to be bred in the great country of enlightened constitutionalism. Of course all our governments have acted more or less so as to foster the idea, and the English who come to live here, besides the strong temptations of a foreign residence to become real Liberals, can hardly help appearing to be so, unless they take the line of talking against England and English policy and proceedings. *Prima facie*, it is taken for granted that an Englishman abhors Jesuits and despotism as the two greatest of evils, and would die—or at least give a good deal of money—to provide constitutions for all nations wanting them; and it is difficult to make the natives understand that one is quite content with one's freedom at home from thumb-screws and black-holes without violently sympathizing with all the insurrectionists in Europe.³³

What must have come most as a shock was the naïve belief of the Greeks that they were being disciples of English democratic principle when, in fact, the radical doctrines which inspired them came from the very country they detested for being reactionary:

France is in the way to get hold of the political training of these people; for the only foreign newspapers they look at are the French—*Siecle*, *National Debats*, and *Presse*. I should doubt, were it not so improbable *à priori*, whether a *Times* ever reaches Athens: I have not seen or heard of one (yes—there is one at the English reading room). And the course of opinion is decidedly French, even among the English party who detest the French Government because it is upholding the German Court notions and policy of the King; they look for material help to Lord Palmerston and his three-deckers, but for intellectual direction, they take their ideas and formulae from their oracles, the French Liberal press and M. Thiers. It is curious though to see France viewed as backing up the old notions of Royal power, and England simply as the representative of Liberalism and all that sort of thing.³⁴

From Greece, liberated from an alien yoke but struggling thus to establish itself as a Parliamentary democracy, Church next set foot in Italy where a strange and premature sort of Liberalism was being inaugurated before the domination of Austria

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had ended. Then, at Lyons for some weeks in the autumn of 1847 and passing through the country via Marseilles and Paris in the new year, he got some first-hand impressions of what brought France to her Revolution of 1848. For a mind trying seriously to grapple with the meaning of this political upheaval of Europe, the English background from which Church had come—and to which he was on the way back—was a complicating factor. The Oxford man's England of 1847 hardly came up to the idealized picture of the Greek patriots in its attitude to the emancipating tide of opinion. A magistrate from India was seriously asked by Mozley whether it was true that 'the Brahmins were getting Liberal'. And shortly after Church got back to Oriel to try to digest what he had seen in Italy and France, Robert Wilberforce expressed the general opinion of his fellows when he wrote (to Mozley)—'A pretty state we are in altogether, with a Radical Pope teaching all Europe rebellion! Every post brings a fresh argument for the duty of securing the middle classes if possible.'³⁵

Church was still a Conservative, as he was still a Tractarian. But, on both counts now, he had to make some room in his mind for new considerations. His attitude may be fairly assessed perhaps under three categories. Towards movements of liberation he was completely sympathetic. Towards Liberalism as a political issue he was feeling his way forward. Towards philosophical Liberalism as a theory he continued to be directly hostile. It is this hostility which governed Church's attitude to the intellectual forces which had already undermined France before the flight of Louis Philippe. His article on the French Revolution of 1848, published in July that year, does not conceal the scorn he felt for the way which France had of trusting her political life to the purveyors of some grand idea. The English, he observed, brood over an abuse and ponder upon an improvement. Other nations also set themselves limited objectives. But, 'while the Italians are aiming at national independence, and the Germans at national unity, the idea of the French revolution is an entire recasting of society, not in France only, but throughout the civilized world'.³⁶

A study of the republican doctrines—lucidly propagated, for instance, by Louis Blanc—revealed the advent of something new in European politics. Under the name of Socialism was

being offered not a policy for the ignorant but a philosophy for the educated. And the arresting thing which Christians needed to take note of was that, unlike the arid theories of political economy, Socialism based itself on a moral appeal. The contrast between the two was very striking.

One speaks of questions of wages and production in mere terms of the market, which make us forget that they relate to creatures with will and conscience, and to whom they bring suffering or pleasure: the other invades with the idea of duty the limits within which self-interest thought itself privileged and secure, and gravely queries whether property is lawful, and how far the gains of mere capital are compatible with morality. . . . In a word, Socialism adopts the great commandment of charity as the scientific and practicable basis of civilized legislation. This is its boast. It does not reject religion, like the old infidels; it but professes to complete Christianity. It takes up, not with less faith, but with more philosophy, what Christianity failed in. . . . Christianity makes good men, but leaves society unjust and cruel; its individual charity heals single wounds, but cannot stop the fount of evil. It has failed—so say these apostles of a new Christianity—because its doctrines were not hopeful enough; because it wanted faith, because it dared not trust man.³⁷

That, so far as Church was concerned, was the important point about the Republic of 1848. Unlike Kingsley, he was not swept off his feet by the moral tornado of this accusation and appeal. He did not think humanity, taking into consideration all its interests, would benefit by the abolition of constitutional procedures. The prospect of economic justice for the governed—so we may read between the lines in an essay too thoughtful to be roughly summarized—may be purchased at too dear a price politically. It might be feasible, ‘by education, and by a state all-powerful and all-wise, to do those impossibilities which the Church had failed in’. But, in the meantime, alas, the Republic has to do what the tyrants whom it supersedes have always done—make itself secure by force. ‘Of course it must: who can blame it? for it, too, is made up of the strong and the weak; it, too, is afraid of opinion—it must seem to contradict its own first principles. It has to proscribe the innocent, because they *may* be dangerous.’³⁸

Theologically, however, Socialism impressed Church as a new force to reckon with. He foresaw that ‘the dominion of

the many' was, sooner or later, assured; and he did not regard it as, of necessity, a blessing or a curse. That was a matter of history, and not a proof that Socialism must be right. The serious thing to remember was that, 'visionary as are its hopes, and anti-Christian its design, its warnings coincide with those of the Bible. They coincide, but not for the same ends.' It might best be regarded as a sort of heresy, analogous in modern days to Manicheeism of old. The hard thing for its adherents will be if, in their blind following, 'they meet with the eternal laws across their path, and refusing this life as one of probation, they find it at least not one of refreshment'.³⁹

Like other Englishmen brought up in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, Church could not unreservedly bring himself to admire the French character.* There emerges in this article of 1848 something reminiscent of Burke when Church declares that true government always demands a core of pious loyalty towards institutions. What then, he asks, is to be expected in France where this has been sterilized by the brilliance of a shallow school of writers whose legacy to their nation was a general state of scepticism? Amongst Italians, whether in cities or villages, he felt a kindlier sympathy. For, with all their revolutionary ardour, they had not lost an instinct of reverence for authority. And consonant with this, it was fitting that while he was in Italy he should immerse himself in the thought of the supreme Christian poet, whose themes were hierarchy and Providence, politics and judgement. During his summer wanderings about the peninsula, after crossing from Corfu, Church carried with him a small, well-worn copy of the *Divina Commedia*. This volume, which he piously laid on Dante's tomb at Ravenna, was filled with marginal notes and jottings. It bears witness (as his daughter says) to the 'associations which had grown up during the journey round numberless passages of the poem, the last entry at the closing canto of the *Paradiso* bearing the date, "Florence, Christmas Day, 1847"'.⁴⁰

The fruits of these pilgrimage studies are to be found in an

* Not till the tragedy of Sedan occurred did he discover with sudden alarm that the principal plague-spot of European *hubris* lay henceforth in the scientific militarism of Germany rather than in the sceptical intellect of France. Gambetta might, as his friends continued to insist, be a jackanapes; but what he feared was the figure of Frankenstein looming up from over the Rhine.

article on Dante which appeared in the January number of the *Christian Remembrancer* in 1850.

VII. DANTE

It might seem a vain thing to set about appreciating what is essentially itself an article of appreciation. But Dean Church at his most ephemeral was never a hack writer; and there is reason to believe that when he turned his attention to certain historic figures he did so not as a literary exercise but to express vicariously the development of his own life of faith. His genius for discipleship betook itself most happily to the way of intellectual pilgrimage. It led him with almost as much sympathy to imbibe the spirit of an Anselm whom he had not seen as that of the Newman he had lived with at Oriel. This gift for entering into the minds of the prophetic dead was bound up with an unmistakable suggestion that he and his generation were living in a situation startlingly parallel to theirs. He came to Dante therefore with qualifications of an unusually vital kind. It is the vitality which interests us.

Dante studies as such have made considerable progress since 1850 and the field is now largely the preserve of specialists. But Church and his contemporaries had the good fortune to live in days when literature was an open world for amateurs. Equipped with a sound schooling in the ancient classics and able to read later European authors in the original, a man like Church thought it nothing to take a comfortable look round, pick up some important book while travelling the Continent and exercise himself in his own way upon the history and letters of a nation. Naturally an approach of this kind was apt, on the technical level, to be superficial; but, even so, the scholarly conscience would generally keep its owner up to a respectable degree of competence. Sheer enjoyment was the motive power. Church, in making himself for the time being a commentator on the *Divine Comedy*, takes a delight in picking out instances of Dante's 'writing power'. His own experience of Italian landscape, with its changing skies and the natural life of the seasons, tempts him to pile up quotations for their vividness' sake. He likes to compare his author with Lucretius; and says—again giving examples—'it is curious to observe him taking Virgil's

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similes and altering them'. But all that is enthusiasm by the way. The essence of Church's method is to handle great things greatly. From the essay's opening paragraph, which must remain unsurpassable as a critical verdict, he never falters in the purpose of establishing the true nature of the poem as a cultural landmark in European history.

For entering the spirit of literature, as well as for taking in the sweep of Western institutions, this was the royal road. In following it, Church became a spokesman for many of his day. The educated classes of the nineteenth century, as readers and as travellers, still possessed something of an international understanding. Moreover, at the dining-table of an English statesman, or in some rectory drawing-room, it was the womenfolk as well as the men who might quite naturally bring Dante into the conversation. Mary Gladstone pored over the *Commedia* at odd times, and Jane Arnold at Fox How would read a few cantos to her mother when the rest of the family had gone to bed. Now, the interest thus taken in Dante was not prompted by his being a psychological phenomenon, nor was the approach to his work dominated by considerations of sociology. What the appeal was becomes evident in the pages of Church's essay. Dante provided a cultural embodiment of the Christian principle of morality on the grand scale. He was pre-eminently concerned with human character as it must be seen under divine judgement. The earnest Victorian conscience found itself stimulated and fortified by awful insights into the nature of heaven and hell. Imagination served to reinforce the ever-present conviction that each mortal must come to account for the manner in which the fleeting moments of life have been employed. The *Divine Comedy*, indeed, was regarded by the well-educated strata of godfearing Englishmen as a kind of medieval supplement to the Bible. 'Dante', says Church, 'was the restorer of seriousness in literature. He was so by the magnitude and pretension of his work and by the earnestness of his spirit.'⁴¹

But the special claims of Dante upon Church stem mainly perhaps from his embarrassing way of making a juxtaposition between the glorious vision of religion and the sordid facts of politics. He has power to convict the conscience by being unexpectedly concrete. Instead of moralizing in general he seizes

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real personages from history and presents them, with the stench of hell fresh upon them, right under the reader's nose. Or, again, from the smile of a girl in a street of this earth love soars to the Beatific Vision. For the eye of poetic faith time is annihilated by inherent truth. But romantic perception is not all. The soul, though born of grace, has to grapple with slippery and mundane facts. The setting for salvation is amid such un-ideal contexts as the politics of medieval Italy. This doctrine spoke home to Church. First, had he not had tragic experience of factions already? Could he, looking forward, ever hope for a life in which men are not summoned to take sides and fight from opposite camps? In terms of internecine feuds he could respond with appreciation to the message of Dante. Secondly, on the topographical level he always felt a fascination before the prospect of historic cities. Venice, Constantinople, Brusa, Rome, Oxford—all come up for visual and moral scrutiny somewhere in his writings. But his description of medieval Florence has a significance of its own. Here Dante's life knew for its background the civil war between Ghibellines and Guelfs, with the white lily and the red for their badges. But in the essay, besides getting a picture of street warfare in thirteenth-century Italy, we can sense that Church had as romantic an attachment for Florence as Scott had for Edinburgh.

Dante, as Church understood him, conveyed above all else a warning against being a spectator of romance. The very inelegancies of his style were perhaps not accidental. Life cannot be lived by those who treat it as being principally so much subject-matter for the literary man or the academic historian. Nor has the religious man any right to retreat from the political issues of his own day and generation. It is at the point where history is still in the warm state as current politics that the life of grace can be woven with it into the fabric of Providence. The natural leanings which Church had towards the purely academic, the purely literary or the purely religious life were subordinated to that conviction. He had embraced it in principle at the time he wrote *St. Anselm*, but its fuller implications are finally exemplified in his *Dante* about seven years afterwards.

Much of Church's later thought seems to be built upon what these two masters of medieval Christendom taught him con-

cerning the Catholic foundations of civilized society in Europe. But, though essentially at one in doctrine, they each made a different impact upon him. Perhaps this is understood best by remembering that, midway between the dates when he made the two studies, the parting from Newman had occurred. Placed as he had been at Oxford, Church could hardly fail to grasp as a key to his own vocation the challenging fact that the Catholic religion in Dante was of the critical kind. He, like the poet, had been sophisticated by some attention to politics and wanted to do justice to the strange facts and anomalies of life as it is. His orthodoxy had not been undermined but it would remain transfigured henceforth by a new vision of the living judgement of God. The Middle Ages to which the historical instincts of Church had at first turned for religious inspiration were seen to be, upon closer study, even more dark and frightening than his own much-harassed nineteenth century. There were two medieval pictures to reckon with, not one. Whereas in Anselm's world the apparent struggle was that of a saint against the rough, solid face of tyranny in high places, in Dante's world the issues were altogether more complex. Instead of a Rufus, the Church's enemies were legion. The way of honest Christian living amidst the ecclesiastical and secular treacheries of Italian politics had become almost impossible to discern. Pope and Emperor might make equal and opposite claims upon the allegiance of the subject and his soul. Historically considered, the complications of the vast struggle, as it affected prelates and nobles and citizens in a city like Florence, were almost beyond moral comprehension. The chatter of Tractarian parsons about Erastianism seemed puerile when set against such a chapter of history.

It had required imaginative treatment at the hands of a great poet to unravel the issues before the consciences of men could be rationally engaged. And why should Englishmen in Queen Victoria's day expect to get their questions answered for them on the cheap? That was the outward aspect of things. But inwardly, too, there was a deep cleavage to face. The scandal of the divided city, which reflected a divided Christendom, had its roots in the human heart as such. And it was the prophetic office of Dante to show that in the wild wood of this life man has to find himself in the process of finding his path to the City of

God. Under the Dantean judgement he is seen to be a mixed being, bearing within him infinite possibilities both of holiness and demonic hate. Indeed, it is because his nature is ambivalent that his social institutions also present a double possibility. Church was a student of Dante in drawing the inference that the remedy of the Gospel for the condition of Europe in his own age was not to force back the sacred and the secular where possible into an ecclesiastical mould, but to expect and seek some new dispensation of God. As a student of Dante, as well as a student of the Bible, he could preach that secular developments, by escaping from clerical control, do not become immune from divine judgement. There is, indeed, the more need for all men, merely as men, to recognize the stern laws of Providence under which they continue in being. Any portion of the world which seems to have outgrown the Church urgently requires to learn that Christian morality is not simply the concern of churchmen but is vital for the saving from hell of every human personality. Along such lines of application Church was to carry from the inspired polity of Dante lessons relevant to the unfolding of modern civilization as a whole. The thought of that medieval Italian was indeed a rich vein for an English churchman of the mid-nineteenth century to strike.⁴²

Its richness can be seen by the effect it had in assisting Church to develop his master theme of hope for the human race. He found convincingly illustrated in Dante the generous scope which is offered to an imaginative mind within the context of Christian humanism, theologically understood. Church was never in danger of forgetting that the human capacity to know and enjoy is always to be measured against the cost of man's redemption on the Cross. Perhaps therefore the final merit of the *Commedia* is its power to represent a completely satisfying vision of humanism according to that measure:

Nowhere else in poetry of equal power is there the same balanced view of what man is, and may be; nowhere so wide a grasp shown of his various capacities, so strong a desire to find a due place and function for all his various dispositions. Where he stands contrasted in his idea of human life with other poets, who have been more powerful exponents of its separate sides, is in his large and truthful comprehensiveness. Fresh from the thought of man's condition as a whole, fresh from the thought of his goodness, his greatness, his

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power, as well as of his evil, his mind is equally in tune when rejoicing over his restoration, as when contemplating the ruins of his fall. . . . No one ever measured the greatness of man in all its forms with so true and yet with so admiring an eye, and with such glowing hope, as he who has also portrayed so awfully man's littleness and vileness. And he went further—no one who could understand and do homage to greatness in man, ever drew the line so strongly between greatness and goodness, and so unhesitatingly placed the hero of this world only—placed him in all his magnificence, honoured with no timid or dissembling reverence—at the distance of worlds, below the place of the lowest saint.⁴³

We cannot leave this essay without taking note that Church in his treatment of Dante insists at the outset upon pointing us away from the poetry to the actual life of the poet. He is not satisfied with the fact that in the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso* the vast theme of man's restoration is gloriously developed, and that throughout the whole work there runs the thought of Divine mercy bringing good out of evil across the length and breadth of the world's history. What finally appealed to Church in Dante was not simply his message or the form in which he uttered it. He felt, above all, a sort of awe for the man himself. Dante, in his life, was not content to taste the vision of beauty, either as the lover of Beatrice or the poet of courtly love. We see him as a person of genius who might well have made the great refusal and stayed within the security of a life of culture. But he chose with courage to jeopardize his integrity and know the fullness of manhood by entering the besmirching lists of politics. And there, having lost what mortal love could give, he lost also the honours of life and went into exile—a broken man. Yet out of the dark pit of personal tragedy God raised him up a new creature, able thereafter—as only the reborn are able—to speak the truth in love to other men if they will hear:

. . . it was the factions of Florence which made Dante a great poet. But for them, he might have been a modern critic and essayist, born before his time, and have held a high place among the writers of fugitive verses; in Italy, a graceful but trifling and idle tribe, often casting a deep and beautiful thought into a mould of expressive diction, but oftener toying with a foolish and glittering conceit, and whose languid genius was exhausted by a sonnet. He might have

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thrown into the shade the Guidos and Cinos of his day, to be eclipsed by Petrarch. But he learned in the bitter feuds of Italy not to trifl; they opened to his view, and he had an eye to see, the true springs and abysses of this mortal life—motives and passions stronger than lovers' sentiments, evils beyond the consolations of Boethius and Cicero; and from that fiery trial which without searing his heart, annealed his strength and purpose, he drew that great gift and power, by which he stands pre-eminent even among his high compeers, the gift of being real. And the idea of the *Commedia* took shape, and expanded into its endless forms of terror and beauty, not under the roof-tree of the literary citizen, but when the exile had been driven out to the highways of the world, to study nature—on the sea or by the river or on the mountain track—and men, in the courts of Verona and Ravenna, and in the Schools of Bologna and Paris—perhaps of Oxford.⁴⁴

Church was thirty-five when he launched 'Dante' upon the world in 1850. He had attained the stature of a mature faith upon Anglican foundations at a time when many others of his generation felt that their religious problems had become too much for them.* He seems to have been led by a sure instinct not to pursue religion in the abstract or strive to establish it as a rational possibility. His talents were more congenially employed in recognizing any actual embodiment of the power of the Gospel when it came his way—in personal biographies, historical achievements, and political situations. In the spirit and content of Dante he found himself confronted with the fullest possible conspectus of how Christian life operates, as a sort of miraculous fact, in the concrete affairs of a bewildering age. With that, Church knew, the adult stage had been reached. The pattern of modern perplexities could only be, morally and religiously, a variation of what had been revealed. In this range of perceptions Dante marks the peak. At the same time, Church never really left what may be called his 'St. Anselm' loyalties behind; he never lost his love for Newman and that spirit of holy withdrawal which Newman exemplified

* His friend, the poet Clough, resigned his Fellowship at Oriel on grounds of conscience and went to study the 1848 Revolution in France just as Church returned to England. Wanderings in Italy and America did nothing to dispel recurrent scruples in a mind which yet retained perhaps an essential will to believe. 'He is', wrote Church, 'a noble-minded and most able fellow, who has sacrificed a good deal—on very high principles, if not wisely.' (*Life and Letters of Dean Church*, 144. Cf. *Letters of Asa Gray*, II, 394, 395.)

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with such grace. But the practical issue was plain. It had to be the 'Dante' mode of affirmation henceforth for Anglicanism as a whole. Church had by this time taken a good look at the contemporary world in all its contaminated splendour and he knew that, for him, it would not be right to give up interest in its affairs. If he could not himself enter the political arena, he would watch and pray for those who did. Every mundane situation was important because some sign of a Providential unfolding ought to be visible to Christian statesmanship in the turn of events.

In that mind he continued with his hidden but influential work as a principal commentator of the *Guardian* upon current affairs—always with an eye upon this figure of the Christian statesman. Church had also become the central personality in that forgotten group at Oxford which looked to Mozley now rather than to Pusey for theology, but which needed more than a theological instructor. The loss of Newman had taught this group that what they required was both a new policy and someone to implement it.* Everything pointed towards Gladstone. He was their darling whose star might one day be in the ascendant. How far anyone in the group had deliberately calculated on that seems doubtful. Rogers was certainly a diplomat, and he did pull wires with Gladstone when the opportunity came, but neither he nor the others have quite the appearance of conspirators. So far as Church is concerned the salient fact is, that the personal admiration for Gladstone which he shared with the group was matched by a striking moral and intellectual affinity with the development of Gladstone's political outlook.

* Their position, in its own smaller way, was analogous to that of the Laudian exiles after 1649. Dean Church (although a High Anglican by doctrinal conviction in a way that Clarendon perhaps never was) had about him, upon ecclesiastical issues, a strategic and constitutional temper reminiscent of Clarendon.

CHAPTER FOUR

Church and State



I. 1850: THE GORHAM CASE

CHURCH had arrived at something like a mature conception of modern ecclesiastical polity just when the Church of England sustained a shock which many Anglicans, less realistic than he, regarded almost with despair. And no one, amongst those whose churchmanship was shaken to its foundations by the Gorham case, suffered more searching of heart than Mr. Gladstone. Yet from that time can be dated a convergence of view between him and Church about the course to set for piloting the Establishment through the dangers which lay ahead. How much direct influence the one had in the mental development of the other is not easy to say. But three things are certain—that the intellectual transformation of their position as High Churchmen ran parallel for some years; that Church was first to see his way through to a new policy for Anglicanism; that Gladstone emerged from the Gorham ordeal prepared to forward, as political opportunity should offer, the principles laid down by Church in his essay of 1850, ‘On the Relations between Church and State’. That meant something very different from what Gladstone had himself previously envisaged.

Indeed the theological transitions through which he passed before this time throw a remarkable light upon his mode of advance. He had always felt a strong vocation towards the priesthood, and religion remained the driving force behind his political life. ‘My hopes and convictions for the English nation are’, he wrote, ‘only second to my faith in the Church.’ Yet in his religious as well as his political outlook, Gladstone made leaps which he liked to think were due to logical compulsion. First he convinced himself out of his original Evangelical views

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by a study of the Book of Common Prayer. Then, having embraced a political career, he felt a special urge to draw up some rationale of the Established Church, and produced in 1838 a heavy disquisition on *The Church in its Relations with the State*. The archaic conception of society here promulgated quite horrified Gladstone's friends; and, fortunately for his Parliamentary future, he discarded it without more ado. After this, though never personally within the Tractarian circle, he developed a High Churchmanship of his own and learnt much through intimate discussion with two clerical friends, Henry Edward Manning and James Hope (better known by the name Hope-Scott which he adopted later). But Gladstone always declared that he owed his position to his having mastered William Palmer's *Treatise on the Church of Christ*.¹

To a mind so formed, the events of 1850 came as a bombshell. A clergyman named Gorham, it will be recalled, had been presented by the Crown to a living in the diocese of Exeter; but Phillpotts, the Bishop of Exeter, refused to institute him because he had reason to regard him as a heretic. Whereas the Prayer Book states that a person is at Baptism 'now . . . regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church', Mr. Gorham had gone out of his way to deny the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration. He persisted in this under examination and, when the Bishop's authority was upheld by the archiepiscopal court of the Province, Gorham appealed to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. That Committee, representing the Crown, overruled the Bishop and the Provincial court and declared that Gorham had a right to be instituted because his views were not 'contrary or repugnant to the declared doctrine of the Church of England as by law established'.

Here was a major crisis for the Church. Matters looked even uglier than they had done in the black days of 1845. For, with the spread of the Oxford Movement, an increasing number of more devout and intelligent churchmen, including Mr. Gladstone and his friends, had become specially sensitive to any public suggestion that the Church of England depended upon the State for her authority in things spiritual. Gladstone at once became prominent amongst the High Anglicans who flared up everywhere in anger and alarm. For to them, this

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was a new threat. Previously it had been a question of giving allegiance to the Pope in order to be within the Catholic Church. The Tractarians and others, who repudiated Newman and Ward on that point, had made it their boast that the great dogmas of the Catholic Faith were as fully held by the English as by the Roman Church. But did not the Gorham judgement give the lie to this Anglican claim? How could a Church call herself Catholic when the State, through a civil tribunal, forced her to deny the efficacy of the first Sacrament and left the Nicene Creed ‘shorn of an article’?^{2*}

The year 1850, because of this, placed Gladstone under a supreme ordeal of religious depression. His close correspondents, Hope and Manning, were fatally demoralized, and his own textbook Anglicanism had received a direct blow when the Privy Council’s verdict was announced on 8 March. For events were now forcing him to reflect that, as Lathbury says, ‘an absolutely orthodox past did not insure a particular Church against a heretical future’. The best he could do in the darkness of the weeks immediately following was to utter a cry of heroic but desperate loyalty. ‘Fully believing that the death of the Church of England is’, he wrote, ‘among the alternative issues of the Gorham case, I yet also believe that all Christendom and all its history have rarely afforded a nobler opportunity of doing battle for the Faith in the Church than that now offered to English Churchmen.’ He hoped that the bishops would stand forth as shepherds to defend the doctrinal liberty of the Church. But, despite Blomfield’s effort to bring in a Bill for creating a new Court of Appeal, all was in vain. Disheartened clergymen took the Newman course and seceded to Rome in a fresh drove. And, within a year, to add the final bitterness to Gladstone’s miseries, the number included his two most cherished friends, one of whom later rose to be a cardinal.³

Now, with Church, things were not as bad as that. However much he deplored this further damaging blow to the Anglican cause, he felt no tendency to despair. He had got over his personal ordeal five or six years before. The experience

* Such was the alarmist view of the Puseyites. But the heat of controversy caused them to overlook the relevant fact of what degrees of meaning the term ‘regeneration’ at Infant Baptism could imply—and had been thought to imply in previous centuries of theology. Mozley, after years of exhaustive study, had come round by 1855 to have ‘no doubt of the substantial justice of the Gorham decision’.

served to toughen his faith, and he was now well equipped to take a campaigner's view, having accepted Newman's collapse as 'a new point of departure for those who believed in the Catholic foundation of the English Church'. In particular, he had of late years thoroughly plumbed the business of relating ecclesiastical theory to political fact. Any anger he felt about the unexamined assumptions by which Parliament could at length make a travesty of the Establishment, was in Church a cold and settled anger. But, together with a determination to fight for a readjustment, he retained a grip of the plain facts in what he knew to be a complex situation. All this is evident in the article on Church and State which he was able to get printed in the *Christian Remembrancer* in April 1850, within a month of the Gorham judgement.^{4*} It arose out of his concern, not with the theology of the case but with the scandal of seeing an ecclesiastical issue decided by a secular court.

He claimed no originality for the main argument employed. This, he said, had been powerfully stated long before the present perplexities in the *Letters of an Episcopalian* published at Oxford in 1826 and thought to be the work of Whately. Yet, once again it was needful to reassert the claim that the Church in England, however closely connected with the Crown, had never lost sight of the principle that she had powers which no Crown or State on earth could, or would, pretend to confer. This truth was realized in the past by rulers and people alike. And, if things were now viewed on the assumption that the Church had been transformed from what she once was 'into a phase, a peculiar aspect or side, of the nation of England, for which the Parliament and Courts of England are the only rightful authorities', it was the duty of churchmen to 'get it overthrown'. So far, the orthodox Tractarian with still some teeth in his head!⁵

But Church's motive in this article was not to sound a clarion call to arms. He set himself rather to unravel the truth from a very complicated situation. To do so involved a careful survey of constitutional development at various stages of history. In fairness to lawyers and governments it behoved churchmen to search patiently into the recorded facts. The first step towards

* Reprinted by Macmillan in 1899 as a separate pamphlet entitled *On the Relations between Church and State*.

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a clarification of the contemporary issue was to go behind the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and study the basic nature of the Royal Supremacy. Church reminded his readers that this expression, in spite of its evil association with a despotic monarchy at the Reformation, originated in an honourable understanding which was much more ancient. A large part of the article consists in an historical examination of the position held by the Crown in the religious affairs of Western Europe through the centuries. The visitatorial powers claimed by monarchs over the affairs of the Church in their realms were not (it could be proved) a Tudor imposition, but went back through our medieval kings to the Anglo-Saxon age and linked up with ancient usage on the Continent. An article which so dispassionately traced the legal position backwards from Henry VIII to the laws of Justinian and Charlemagne, brought into view (as Mozley remarked) 'one whole side of the truth which had been completely suppressed' in this controversy for some twenty years. The subject of Erastianism and the Reformation had suffered much from Tractarian ideology; and it was typical of Church to cool the temperature by making a wide survey and supplying a relevant *catena* of forgotten facts.⁶

Having done that, he next dealt in this same pamphlet with present realities and future prospects. A case had been made out for believing that if the State, by the time of the Gorham crisis, had arrived at a position hostile to the true interests of the Church, it had got there unintentionally. If things had reached a constitutional impasse it was not beyond the goodwill of reasonable men to set it right. Pressure should be used, on the plea of common justice, to remove constitutional anomalies which now hindered the Established Church from doing her work. There seemed no reason why she should not be allowed 'under Parliamentary sanction and guarantee, to carry on reforms of her own, to adjust her position to altered circumstances, to administer her own laws. . . . The State which has granted the Reform Bill and Free Trade has no ground to deny the Church a more free and consistent position'. So, as well as being forthright, Church took up the Anglican problem along lines thoughtfully adapted to the best spirit of the nineteenth century.⁷

This judicious approach to what has, in some form, always

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been one of the most subtle problems of government, was happily calculated to raise the ecclesiastical crisis of 1850 out of the atmosphere of mere panic and high words. It was a recall to statesmanship.

Precisely what effect this had on Gladstone is not known. Perhaps it did something to produce signs of a constructive temper in the *Remarks on the Royal Supremacy* which he addressed to the Bishop of London in June. Church, reviewing it for the *Guardian*, remarked that 'Mr. Gladstone has not disappointed the confidence of those who have believed of him that when great occasions presented themselves, of interest to the Church, he would not be found wanting.' Was this an expression of relief—or not, rather, the voice of anxious courtship and encouragement? Gladstone was undergoing what, at best, could only be a painful reconstruction of his confidence as a churchman. In August he wrote from Hawarden, still arguing with Manning, and confessed that he had no heart to try to solve the problem of a national establishment of religion which had become, or was fast becoming, insoluble. He could wish, he said, for 'some divine art' of knowing how to rise out of the appalling ecclesiastical situation of the time into 'something better than historical Anglicanism, which essentially depended upon conditions that have now passed away'.⁸

That way of putting it would hardly have satisfied Church whose conviction was that 'historical Anglicanism', though chastened by calamities, ought to be adapted to new conditions rather than replaced. Such, indeed, was the line which Gladstone himself, after his recovery from depression, wholeheartedly adopted. During the forty years of political life which lay ahead he became the main instrument in carrying forward State policies which, because they were basically inspired by her moral teaching, presupposed the authority of the Church. And, alongside that presupposition, the political temper of the nation showed itself more ready to allow a Church that was in earnest to put her own house in order. Through the efforts of Henry Hoare, the banker, a society was formed in 1851 to press for the return of some practical power to the dormant Convocations. Church himself was not prominent in these moves but he had made a study of the same

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institution in France, and Mozley urged both him and Gladstone to stir themselves over what quickly developed into a live issue. To Bishop Wilberforce and to Hoare belongs the credit of bringing their campaign to a successful conclusion within a few years.

As a consequence, when Dean Church added a preface to the 1881 edition of his essay on Church and State, he was able to note that the revival of the Convocations—Canterbury in 1854 and York in 1861—had done something to give Anglicanism a say in its own affairs which was denied to it when he first wrote. Gradually indeed the policy of patient readjustment, which he had the satisfaction of seeing Gladstone espouse, proved not to be in vain.⁹

II. 1851: AFFAIRS OF ITALY

The ecclesiastical policy of the State did not present itself to Church as a purely English problem. Having something of a European mind, he saw it in the context of what was happening on the Continent. Since his first association with the *Guardian* he had been watching with a keen student's eye the contemporary spirit as it everywhere affected religion through government. The philosophical Socialism which he had noted in France had no direct bearing upon the situation in England. But the international spread of Liberalism elsewhere could not be ignored. Italy in particular attracted his attention; and there he saw enacted a strange encounter between Liberalism and Ultramontanism. The relevance of this to England was by way of the topical controversy in Anglican and Roman Catholic circles about the scandal, as it appeared, of the Establishment. His counter-reflections upon the Italian situation throw light upon the political direction which Church himself was taking.

Ever since the Napoleonic Wars the people of Italy were affected, like those of other countries, by the spirit of emancipation. Then came Pope Pius IX fondly dreaming that the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Vatican could successfully associate itself with this spirit in the sphere of practical government. Church, on his travels in 1847, had some first-hand experience of the excitement caused by so novel a policy. Writing from

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Bologna to Rogers in August, he remarked that the enthusiasm of the people for Pius IX was 'quite medieval'—

they can talk of nothing else; 'Viva Pio Nono' was written up over almost every other door in the little towns that I passed through—and there is no title too grand for him in the various inscriptions to his honour, from the placard at the street corner to the lofty Latin compositions in San Petronio; these last very striking in their way. . . . The *Fuorusciti*, who have taken advantage of the amnesty, and are successively coming back to their several cities, keep alive the enthusiasm; each refugee who returns and is feted, makes a fresh stir in his town . . .

At one of the inns on the road the innkeeper brought me a translation of a paragraph in the *Morning Chronicle* about Rothschild's election, in which Pio IX is called the 'most enlightened sovereign of the age'. The fat old gentleman was much delighted by this English testimony to the greatness of the Pope, and was very anxious to know what part England would take in the struggle which all here think inevitable between the Pope and Austria. What strikes one a good deal in the people whom I have talked to is, in spite of their enthusiasm, the hopelessness that lies at the bottom of it. They all seem to think that success and prosperity are not for them—that all this is too good to last—that it will end in failure and disappointment. The Pope will be poisoned, or Austria will pull it all down, and the other Powers will stand by. It is the experiment alone which interests them; they become gloomy and desponding as soon as they begin to look forward to its result. And, as far as I know Italian history, this seems almost ingrained.¹⁰

Such scepticism proved only too true. The Liberal experiment which Pius inaugurated in 1846 had, after three years, given place to a tyrannical reaction of royalists and clericals. The Pontiff first flirted with the popular aspirations of the Italian nation. Next, he hesitated and drew back when the aroused nation, quite naturally, required the expulsion of Austria from the soil of Lombardy. Finally, after fleeing to Gaeta, he staged a return to Rome and ruled thereafter as a prince hostile to democracy and backed by foreign armies.

Church, though still ranging himself with Gladstone as a Conservative in English politics, could not approve of such reactionary moves. In 1851 he stated his view that—

Of Liberalism, theoretical and active, there are many shades in Italy; and many who are rightly ranked among its leaders are very

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far indeed from being either destructives or unbelievers. Theorists they may be—unpractical, fruitless disturbers of what exists, for the sake of what is impossible—dreamers over a glorious but irrecoverable past; but such men as Balbo, d'Azeglio, and Rosmini, are at least not enemies of government and order, and, as far as men can know, are as good Catholics as their opponents.¹¹

Amongst those who could be reckoned moderate and responsible idealists, bringing into the public life of Italy a zeal for political reforms without any disloyalty to the Church, was Luigi Carlo Farini. He left his medical practice to become Under-Secretary for Home Affairs to the government of Pius IX in 1846, but was exiled from the Papal States the following year. As an exposure of the Ultramontane reaction and a rallying call to the aspirants for Italian freedom, he published in 1850 his four-volume history, *The Roman State*.

It was Gladstone's translation which brought the book to general notice in England. He, unlike Church, felt little interest in Italian politics as such. The urge to undertake the task of translating Farini came to him characteristically in the flush of energy released by a new uprush of moral indignation. The Gladstones went for a Mediterranean holiday in the autumn of 1850. While at Naples, 'under the acacias and palms, between the fountains and statues of the Villa Reale, looking now to the sea, now to the world of fashion in the Corso', this still-Conservative member for Oxford got into a conversation which took him the first steps towards deviation from the party line. Not that Gladstone was the dupe of secret-society agents and republicans. It was the legal adviser to the British Embassy who awakened in him a decision to see for himself the repressive brutality employed by the despot Ferdinand II. He sat in law-courts to hear the way in which political prisoners were tried, and visited the Neapolitan dungeons to study the horrors of barbarity meted out to them by an absolutist government. Liberals, simply for the crime of being in opposition, were condemned in some cases (says Morley) to more than twenty years' imprisonment 'chained two and two in double irons to common felons'. While his moral wrath sought means to set in motion a protest from the British Foreign Office, Gladstone came across Farini's treatise about the condition of affairs in another part of Italy where political suppression was the

order of the day. His detestation of Roman Catholicism no doubt brought added zeal to the business of exposing what went on in the Papal States. Naples and Rome were swept together in the same energy of wrath; the humanitarian and the enemy of Ultramontanism easily merged in the make-up of Mr. Gladstone. Yet, surprising as it may seem to us in the light of later events, he was not actuated by any desire to forward the unification of Italy as a nation. That, he declared, was a 'purely abstract idea' for which Englishmen had but a limited sympathy. He cared intensely that justice should be gained for individual Italians and groups; but as Morley notes, 'he thought only of local freedom and local reforms'. In short, the concept of Gladstonian Liberalism had not yet dawned.¹²

Church's review of Gladstone's *Farini*, when it was reprinted from the *Christian Remembrancer* of October 1851, occupied nearly eighty pages. Though sympathetic to the views both of the author and the translator, he chose (as we should expect) to deal with the subject rather than the book. What makes the review of special interest is that it reveals the state of Church's political development. It may not be a coincidence that he was the nephew of a general who, after first being employed by the Bourbon monarchy to carry out 'mopping-up operations' in southern Italy, came to lead guerrilla bands for the liberation of Greece. Certainly Church himself, though a Tory by upbringing, grew to sympathize with the European movement towards democracy. His review of *Farini*, besides being another instance of the intellectual glance which he kept directing towards Gladstone, is evidence that he at that time had reached Liberal conclusions in advance of his hero politician on some points.

Perhaps a recent study of Dante had deepened his conception of the vital relationship between patriotic aspirations and a man's faith in God's purpose for human history.* He realized, in the light of what *Farini* stood for, that the unification of Italy as a nation was far from being an abstract affair. Whatever Conservatives in England liked to think, there could be no political settlement of Italian problems simply by the

* Cf. Church's article on *Sordello*—'Dante did that which . . . made all Italians henceforth brethren.'

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removal of local injustices. Concerning the presence of Austria in Italy, Church wrote:

It was a piece of diplomatic flippancy as insolent as it is untrue, which pronounced Italy to be a mere 'geographical expression'. However parcelled out Italy may be—differently governed, and with strong local peculiarities and jealousies, yet history, language and character bind all the Italian races together in a natural cohesion and sympathy, which centuries of conquest and occupation have been unable, we do not say to sever, but even to disturb. The national tie is real and ineffaceable. To judge, at least from the past, Austria, if she keeps Lombardy for five centuries more, will never make the Lombard care about what goes on in Germany or prevent him from caring about what goes on in Rome or Naples. To every Italian, however his life and associations may be pent up within the walls of an obscure municipality, all Italy is a country. In every part of it he is at home as he is nowhere else, even though at a distance of ten miles from his native town he may be in exile.

It is therefore quite impossible that any great series of changes can go on in one part of the peninsula, without putting every other part on the *qui vive*. . . . Piedmont cannot be constitutional without making it more troublesome for Austria to be absolute in Lombardy. . . . It is necessary to bear this fairly in mind, to do justice to the Italian cry for independence, which all the reforming parties, from Rosmini to the Republicans, have uttered alike, and for which, as Mr. Gladstone remarks, little sympathy, indeed little patience, is felt in England. The words of the Roman council of Deputies to the Pope, after the rout of Custoza, are, *as a fact*, we conceive, undeniable: 'The independence of no Italian state can be secure, if all Italy be not independent.'¹³

These are the words of one who, though his boyhood left upon him an indelible love for Italy, remained in such questions a student, anxious mainly to establish the facts. Their force came to be generally realized when Garibaldi, in his red shirt and blue-grey cloak, visited England in 1864 amidst great popular excitement.*

Gladstone's abhorrence of Ultramontanism was apt to call forth from him simply a passionate opposition. Church also detested it and noted, in passing, the incongruity of making grandiloquent claims on behalf of Roman Catholicism in

* He actually came over in the *Ripon*—aboard which Church had sailed out to the Mediterranean seventeen years before.

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England while tolerating the infamous condition of government as it existed in the Papal States. He did not, however, dwell upon that as a weapon of propaganda. To him it seemed much more important to draw the proper conclusions which Christian statesmen elsewhere might take to heart. It was true that Farini's survey demonstrated the disastrous results of an ill-conceived collaboration between the Catholicism of the Vatican and the Liberalism of modern Italy. But it would have been a false conclusion simply to suppose that, as between Catholicism and Liberalism, the one must be right and the other wrong. The essential lesson, as Church perceived it, was to regard the Pio Nono episode as a situation wrongly handled. By implication there was here a general principle to take home. As the Anglican Church came to grips with English Liberalism would matters be more wisely dealt with?

Some indication of Church's mental preparation to face that issue may be found in the concluding words of this review of his. Clerical control in national affairs, he seems to think, is only calculated to precipitate a situation of scandal. Government must be judged on its merits, always, everywhere. The test is whether it promotes goodness, not orthodoxy, in the nation's life. The Christian may be aware that an administration which produces this result does so from secular motives. What then of the glory of God? We can only read between the lines on that point, as we find Church admitting that

the general rule of law in a nation; a real pervading regard paid to truth, justice and equity in matters social and political; a temper of consideration and mercy; an attention, incomplete it may be, but systematic and effectual to the welfare of the poorer classes; a wide sympathy for enterprises of benevolence; a strong sense of security and mutual confidence; and resulting from all this, order, tranquillity, and the successful exercise of industry . . . may be but the exquisitely adjusted contrivance of a worldly-wise selfishness.¹⁴

But (he insists very cogently) the absence of these good things is 'positive proof against the soundness of professed religious principles'.

This conviction was uttered a century or so before the acknowledged advent of the Welfare State. We must beware of assuming from it that the writer would have been a whole-

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hearted supporter of Sidney and Beatrice Webb. What it does show, taken in the context of his association with Gladstone, is that Church was becoming sufficiently liberalized to accept the establishment of a just and wholesome state of civil life as a desideratum which ecclesiastical considerations of themselves ought not to obscure. Would he have agreed, then, that the good of society at large may, in some political situation, require that the apparent interests of the Church be overruled; and that unbelievers, striving honourably for common justice and well-being, may at times be the best agents of Providence? Such a question can hardly be asked without recalling the courageous conclusion to which he had come the previous year in his essay on Church and State. There he had contemplated a state of things in which the Church of Christ, shorn of other and more tangible advantages, could still retain an irresistible hold upon men even in a sceptical and self-relying age, by virtue of her moral character.

Perhaps the right way to look at former liberties and powers of the Church is to view them, not as things sacred in themselves, and meant to be held fast for ever, but as having laid a ground for us, without which we should not now be able to do our work in furthering God's kingdom; and their gradual disappearance, not as significant of the weakening of the Church, but as pointing to the line on which henceforth the Church is to be mainly thrown for its influence . . . 'by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God'.¹⁵

III. FUTURE IMPERFECT

These quotations from various things which Church wrote during the seven years he remained at Oxford after Newman's departure, contain a surprising foretaste of elements which Gladstonian Liberalism was later to display as the personal creed of a great national leader. Church entered the second half of the century with a mind already ripe to face the challenge of Liberalism, not as a theoretical abstraction but as the governing mood of the day. He stood as a man whose religious conviction had been in no wise weakened by the Anglican crisis, but who felt that Church life must henceforth be

directed by a new sense of social responsibility. The line he was expounding had the distinction of being anti-Erastian in purpose but yet empirical in its grasp of English realities. Was there anyone in the Parliamentary arena capable of giving political expression to such an attitude, not for the sake of Oxford opinion or the saving of the Establishment but for the Christian good of the nation? It is that underlying question which made intellectual allies of Gladstone and Church in spite of what seemed in practice a quite tenuous relationship.

At the time of the Gorham case they were both at a very indeterminate point in their careers. Gladstone, no longer Colonial Secretary, was finding his political life almost in abeyance. Church, still a college don and still in deacon's orders, was enjoying at Oxford neither a fully clerical nor a satisfactory academic vocation. Little is known of his personal feelings and movements because he left no diary and there is a complete dearth of letters to or from him at this period. His daughter simply records:

A tutor's life had never been very much to his mind, and his inclinations turned more and more towards pastoral work in some country parish. His engagement in 1850 to Miss Bennett, the daughter of a Somersetshire squire and parson, and a niece of Dr. Moberly, gave a fresh impulse to his wish to settle and make a home. Whilst waiting for a benefice, he took up again for a short time the tutorship at Oriel.¹⁶

Of Church's two brothers, Charles was ordained and later became a Canon of Wells. Bromley, who went to sea, was in command of an East Indiaman bound from Bombay to China in 1851 when she became a total wreck some sixty miles from Sumatra. After months of great privation he died of fever on the desolate island of Eugano where he and a number of the surviving crew had managed to land. That is the only family news we have.

In July 1852 there appeared another article of Church's—'Pascal and Ultramontanism'.^{*} It is a rather sprawling affair but contains amongst other good things a passage in the serio-comic vein at which the author was an adept when handling the Gallic character. The figure cut by a French abbé, vivaciously

* Reprinted from the *Christian Remembrancer* in his *Essays and Reviews* in 1854.

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engaged upon the task of belittling the *Provincial Letters*, offered a possibility of sport too delicious to resist. So, with this sparkle of the old Oriel Common Room about him still, Church prepared to leave an Oxford which—for him—had seen better days. When the Duke of Wellington died in November 1852 he went formally as one of the university representatives to the great national funeral at St. Paul's. Shortly afterwards he bade farewell to Hawkins—that old war-horse between whom as Provost and himself there had grown up a mutual sense of respect, despite the hard blows given and received—and brought his eighteen years of academic life to an end.

That autumn Church had had the offer of a Somersetshire living from Mr. Horner, the Rector of Mells. Before he left Oxford he was duly made priest in the Cathedral by Dr. Wilberforce at the Christmas ordination. Long past was the time when the college might withhold his letters testimonial: they are to be seen, together with the candidate's covering letter, in the Bodleian Library.

PART THREE



Whatley Rectory

CHAPTER FIVE

The Whatley Years, 1853–71



I. THE NEW RECTOR

FOR the first six months of 1853 Church found what it meant for a bachelor and a don, with no parochial training, to become a country parson at the age of thirty-eight. Whatley, three miles from the market town of Frome, is still an agricultural village not much different in appearance from what it was when the new Rector arrived. Taking stock of its position, in the neighbourhood of the Mendip Hills where Somerset runs towards the Wiltshire border, he found it topographically quite interesting. ‘Not far off,’ he noted, ‘for those who have a carriage, are Wells and Glastonbury on one side, and Salisbury, with its plain, and Stonehenge on the other.’ But a London newspaper indicated its being socially off the map by referring to Whatley as a place with a population of about 200, mostly farm labourers, ‘and one gentleman’s house’. And truly, apart from the hospitality of Mells, where Mr. Horner shared his bookish and wider interests and saw him frequently, there was little to relieve Church of mental isolation in such a locality.¹

But, between his institution by Bishop Bagot on 18 January and his marriage in the summer, he had enough practical problems to keep him occupied. The parish had been without a resident parson for many years so there was a dilapidated rectory to make habitable.* In a letter to Lake, addressed from

* Moreover it fell to him as a personal expense to repair the chancel of his church, a building which—apart from its spire—he found rather undistinguished. It had, he remarked, been rebuilt some thirty years before and remained ‘a monument of the taste and economy of that time’. Yet, when the ‘horrid old pews’ were cleared away in a final restoration shortly before he left, nineteen years later, Church expressed a certain sentimental reluctance to part ‘even from the church decorations of old William Shore’. (*Life and Letters*, 143, 193.)

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Whatley (11 June), we gather that he would like to have been out of such a dreary and ‘uncongenial life’ and back where he could discuss the history papers and other tutorial business with his old friends. But, after pulling himself together and saying ‘I have no wish for the great anodyne’, he continues:

I am still living here by myself; ever since I have been here the workmen have had possession of the house, and have still. It seems to take as long to repair an old house nearly as to build a new one. This has not added to my comfort; but it is less than the feeling that I am not qualified even for the small parochial work I have. It is too small to be worked otherwise than single-handed, so that whatever is done I must do. Two sermons a week in perpetuity is of itself a great burden, and in all the matters that happier parochials are so full of, and find the work and enjoyment of their lives in, I am still *ἀπονος*. And even books and the *Times* lose half the interest when there is no one who cares about them to talk to . . . Imagine in these days of the possible storming of Constantinople seeing but one paper a week! When I have the house clear, I shall tempt you to run down here. It is easy by G.W.R. from Bristol, and there is some very jolly country.

Yours affectionately,

R. W. CHURCH.²

He also complained, in a previous letter addressed to Mrs. Johnson in May, of the great change from his Oxford life: ‘I see nobody, and feel no great wish for acquaintances. And two sermons a Sunday is not after my mind. . . . The weather is very fine, and the country looking very pretty; but it does not reconcile me to my transplanting. I think all day long of Shotover, and the bowls at the Observatory, and my den, cold and dirty as it was, at Oriel.’³

Church no doubt began to settle down after his marriage to Helen Bennett on 5 July 1853. The ceremony was solemnized by his brother Charles in the church at Sparkford where the bride’s father, Henry Bennett, was then Rector. Before the wedding the bridegroom had apparently been living at Sparkford; and afterwards the couple occasionally went back there from Whatley, which was only a few miles away. But, though he was henceforth domestically comfortable and could get to know his parishioners better, Church took time to adapt himself to pastoral exigencies. He had to re-arrange his style of

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life. Thus, when he resided at Oxford a voyage to America to see Asa Gray seemed likely enough. But now, though his inclinations for travel did not abate, it became a remote possibility. He had to face the fact that 'what an independent Fellow of a college might do, is effectually barred to a country parson with a small living'. The Crimean War, bringing with it double income-tax and a rise in prices, precluded even an English holiday; but he felt 'ashamed of complaining when people are fighting for us at Sebastopol'. Not till they had been at Whatley six years did the Churches get a long spell away from the parish on pleasure. Health then drove the delicate Rector to take three months off and spend it with his family at Chepstow, 'in a house perched up on the cliffs which overhang the Wye . . . and within easy reach of fine ruins like Tintern, Chepstow Castle and Raglan'.⁴

Church was neither of a grumbling nor a self-pitying nature, and he gradually found means to make life in a west-country parish as tolerable and as rewarding as Sydney Smith had done in his Yorkshire parish of Foston. But for men of intellectual interests such a life can never be entirely satisfactory. Long after Church had surmounted his early repinings, he confessed to James Mozley—'There are only two things which I regret in the life I lead here: one is that I never have the chance of good music, such as one gets in London; the other is that it is so difficult to see the world, and I am getting older and older, and such a number of things not seen that I should like to see'.⁵

To have reduced his regrets to that extent constituted no small achievement. Gradually, indeed, he almost managed to combine the best of two worlds—that of the *littérateur* and that of a rural priest. He had contacts with relatives at Winchester and with colleagues on the *Guardian* in London. Rogers, if he did not run into him at Oxford when some business called up the old members to vote, looked forward to having him as his guest in town at Ovington Square. Church liked to jaunt off, but the birth of a son in May 1854 no doubt tied him more to his wife and home. He got up to Oxford to see the stricken Marriott on his sick-bed and tried to keep in touch with other old friends there through the Johnsons. They expected him at the Observatory to meet Le Verrier and have a look at the total eclipse on 15 March 1858. After failing to join them he

sent an account of such observations as he was able to make at Whatley. But, despite a sort of twilight (which bewildered the rooks from Mells Park and caused Mrs. Church, 'sitting in a north room', to leave off writing) there was nothing dramatic to report. He felt rather humiliated because he had carefully lectured the village children beforehand as to what to expect. The sequel, however, turned out to be of a sort to revive his undergraduate sense of fun. Someone in the neighbouring country town—so he informed Asa Gray—sent the common crier round with the bell to announce that 'in consequence of the disappointment, the eclipse would be repeated next day'.⁶

Gradually indeed Church hit upon a means to combine his cure of souls with some of the leisure advantages he had previously known. In May 1862, after fifteen years' abstinence from foreign travel, he set foot on the Continent again by visiting first the Grenoble region, then Paris. A letter to his wife describes 'my first experience of a real monastery' at the Grande Chartreuse.

It lies on the steep side of the mountain, with great wall-like precipices rising about it almost all round: where there are not rocks there are woods—all as still as can be. The first sight of monastic life was a lay brother in his white gown and hood of the Carthusian order, harnessing two horses to a carriage of some excursionists. I went and rang at the bell, and was admitted by a smiling pleasant lad in a blouse, to whom I expressed my wish to see the convent. I was conducted by him to an anteroom or parlour, where, when we entered, was an old priest on his knees at a *prie-dieu*, before a statue of Notre Dame, with S. Bruno, the founder, bending before her. He got up when we came in, and sat down. My guide knocked at the door of the Père Coadjuteur, who is the receiver-general of strangers. The rule of the house is absolute silence for all the brethren, but this rule does not apply to him. The door was not opened for a while, as he was engaged, but the lad, in asking me to wait a little while, spoke in whispers, and we all sat down in silence. The room was hung round with a few prints of the life of S. Bruno, with a crucifix over the fireplace. . . . I was conducted to the waiting-room of the strangers—the Hall of the Province of France—a stone-paved hall, with numerous chairs and two or three tables, where we are to dine. . . . In this hall the silence was not so complete; two garçons, laying the table, chattered as if they were in a *salle-à-manger*. Presently a white monk in a beard came in and asked me

whether I would dine by myself or with the other strangers: he further brought me a *petit verre* of a famous elixir which they are famous for making here—recommending it after my walk. This was the Frère Benoît, as my guide, the lad who let me in, confidentially informed me. . .

We dined in the stranger's hall, five of us—three Frenchmen and two Englishmen, and spoke French to one another. They gave us a fair dinner of *majre* fare. The Frenchmen discoursed largely of the *tristesse* of the monastic life, and criticized the cuisine: the Englishmen ate and made no remarks. At nine o'clock we found our way to our cells—very clean, brick-floored, but rude in the furniture. I must go to bed, for I am to be called at midnight, to be present at the night service of the monastery.

. . . I was called at a quarter before twelve, and ushered into a gallery at the end of a longish vaulted chapel, at the end of which burned the lamp before the Sacrament, and into which were gliding white figures with lanterns and candles. They took their places and the service began—chanting in a very slow simple manner: where they knew the particular part of it by heart the lights were put out—at best they only gave enough light to read by. It was certainly very solemn to think of these psalms breaking the utter silence of the rocks and forests, and to think of this having been done, almost without interruption in nearly the same manner, and on the same spot, for eight hundred years; and that every night of one's life these men get up at midnight to chant them. The office was from twelve till two, when they glided out again, and I went to bed till six.

Now I am preparing for an ascent of the Grand Som, the highest peak near the convent.⁷

This and descriptions which he sent of street scenes in the French capital reveal how vividly he could always respond to foreign environment. Four years later he got his first view of the Alps, and after that made a point of going to Switzerland annually. The zest for these pleasurable expeditions kept him alive, and it may have been the example of Asa Gray's prodigious tours, as well as his friend's continuous exhortation, which led him to indulge as he did. How the parish duties were maintained during Church's absence is one of the details not recorded.

The mental freshness which resulted from this varied mode of life combined with a fund of natural humility to save him from any sense of self-importance. When past fifty he still found it hard to feel anything but a 'mere boy'. The idea of

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ever becoming a bishop was utterly alien to his mind. When Lord Auckland, his diocesan, pressed upon him the Arch-deaconry of Wells he had no need to think twice about the answer. He preached at Windsor before the Queen in 1869 but, in general, few honours nor excitements came his way.*

With the passage of years Church had taken root at Whatley and accepted it as a vocation of blessedness to be a country parson. The delight he experienced out-of-doors had a wider source than botany. The green landscape of Somerset, swept by north winds, but under the clear skies of May, could arrest his attention by reason of the astonishing boundless light of the sun ($\phi\hat{\omega}s \alpha\sigma\pi\epsilon\tauov$ as he called it). ‘One goes about thinking of bits from all the poets one can remember, to give some touches of the wonder and glory, which become greater, to my mind, every year one lives. But you see I am going mad.’⁸

II. CULTURE AND AGRICULTURE

Doubtless Church achieved the state of being reconciled to his lot. How that came about is interesting because he belonged by nature to the academic breed. His having remained thirteen years in deacon’s orders is an indication that, to start with, he entertained no strong desire for a pastoral ministry. Indeed what consoled him first in his new life at Whatley seems to have been the leisure to pursue his historical studies. The first fruits can be seen in one of his most sustained and polished productions, ‘The Early Ottomans’, into which he put a lot of effort during 1854, only to get from the editor of the *Christian Remembrancer* a complaint about its length. It should perhaps have been a warning to him to stop writing articles and engage upon a full-scale volume. He told Johnson:

I have been thinking lately over an old idea of mine, an account of the times just before the Reformation and Renaissance; the councils of Basle, etc. and John Gerson: not with any controversial purpose, but simply as a curious period of history. It would require much

* He once acted as chaplain to Moberly when, as Bishop of Salisbury, he administered Confirmation at Portland Prison and on board the *Boscawen*. It impressed him strangely to join in worship with 1,200 convicts, especially in the *Te Deum* when they sang very slowly and solemnly, ‘We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge’. After luncheon on the training ship Church struck up an alliance with the first lieutenant who offered to take him next day on board the ironclads in Weymouth Bay. (*Life and Letters*, 195–6.)

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hunting into books to do it in a proper way, and perhaps some travelling, and that is a great obstacle nowadays. I am now, I am glad to say, able to turn my German to account—not with the same facility as French or Italian, but still usefully.⁹

To have accomplished this Church would need to have been much more like Mark Pattison and detached himself from all claims but those of his chosen subject. He undoubtedly had an instinct for pure scholarship, but in him it was always being modified by the call of current concerns. He knew how to work in libraries without being a dilettante, but his interests as a student had often to give way to the demands of life and people close at hand. The rôle which suited him best therefore was that of scholar-journalist. Besides the *Guardian* and *The Times*, another paper to which Church contributed was the *Saturday Review*. Described as the organ through which brains took revenge upon mediocrity, this journal reached the height of its glory in the 'sixties. Though hated and feared by Spurgeon, its columns were open to High Anglican talent and Church wrote regularly for it between 1861 and 1871. The historian J. R. Green, then an East End curate, became an outstanding contributor at the same period.* He, indeed, is credited by Gooch with being the creator of that light but learned form of article which he calls the 'historical causerie'.† But Church, after working with Mozley in the earlier Tractarian journals was certainly no novice at the biographical essay. With him, perhaps, what might have been a mere sketch is usually built up on lines of moral analysis to form a portrait criticism of the character under discussion. The master hand for which Church's articles became known, especially in the *Guardian*, cost him no small labour to achieve. This meant that between the age of thirty-eight and fifty-seven his opportunities of authorship at Whatley were taken up in doing the small and regular tasks of a critic rather than in following some large scheme of original work.

Experience as a parish priest also modified Church's outlook

* The two did not, however, come across each other till 1872 when the younger man wrote (in a letter to Freeman on 27 April): 'At Dickenson's I met Church, surely the most lovable of Deans. At any rate I fell straightaway in love with him, and do hope from a word he dropt that I may see more of him.' (*Letters of John Richard Green*, ed. Leslie Stephen (1901), p. 316.)

† Cf. G. P. Gooch: *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (1913), 353.

on life. Preparing sermons for a rustic congregation, irksome though it was to him and a dissipation of his talents, showed a significant care for the minds of unlettered people. He spent years trying humbly to eliminate from himself, for parochial purposes, all trace of the literary man and Fellow of Oriel. The result leaves no thrills for posterity. For, candidly, most people will find Church's *Village Sermons* dreary reading today. But it should be remembered that they represent an effort to carry out the Tractarian rule of being impersonal and unpretentious. They are the stern oblation of one who took Newman's parochial aims for his ideal. Newman had recalled that Keble once borrowed 'a friend's sermon which had been preached before the University and, I suppose, been well spoken of to him. When he returned it, he whispered into his friend's ear, "Don't be original".' Fortunately for the Vicar of St. Mary's an Oxford congregation could appreciate the taut vitality which underlay the apparently colourless opening of his sermons. And (fortunately for the congregation) Newman was the sort of genius whom you could be sure would, without intending it, break his own rules in the end. Self-suppression, maintained for three-fourths of his discourse, would suddenly yield before an outburst of style and personality which transformed the whole thing into something memorable. But Church kept his rules only too well and, as a consequence, often got a poor response from the parish. 'Shall I tell you', he said in one of his village sermons, 'what is the most painful hour of the week to me?—the hour that, week by week, makes me feel that all I have said has been wasted, and done no good? that makes me doubt whether I am doing any good here? It is the time when I come into church on Sunday morning and see it so empty of worshippers, and think of the reasons which keep them away, and of the dishonour done to our Almighty Father.' The deliberate plainness of his preaching may have had something to do with it. For a congregation of labourers, hearing words from which not only exuberance but most concrete images have been excluded, are not qualified to read between the lines. Pure religion and measured statements never quite go with popular preaching.¹⁰

This makes more wonderful the triumph of personal sincerity over unnatural odds. In other things besides preaching Church

knew that it was a problem of grace to overcome that general barrier which always exists between those who live amongst books and those who do not. Speaking to ordinands in Wells Cathedral, he laid it down as a fact that class distinctions are not mainly economic. The ‘separation which parts conditions is not so vast as that which lies between minds’. Then he asked his hearers to picture the kind of world in which an English parson has to commend the Gospel. The experience of the preacher himself is concentrated into this heart-felt passage:

A clergyman in the humblest of our country parishes finds, as he passes from house to house, that he passes from one world to the other. He passes from one set of people, to whom without any extraordinary gifts, the general order of things is familiar, a society where what has happened in the world and what is known of it lies open, where the inherited thoughts and experience of former times are a common possession, where books and conversation and long use have more or less widened men’s ways of thinking, and perhaps made them exact, enquiring, and impartial:—and he goes from them to another, to whom the heavens mean nothing at all, and the earth only the field where day after day, from sunrise to night, they toil in the frost and in the heat for their coarse meals; who know their work, and measure all other knowledge by it; to whom everything outside them is bounded and hidden by an impenetrable cloud, broken only by the most fantastic delusions; whose meagre list of words hardly reaches beyond the expression of the necessities of life, and the simplest elementary emotions of the soul. How are you to measure the interval between such minds and one which can even understand what great poets and mathematicians have thought and created? Two extremes, if you will, with infinite gradations between them; yet extremes which we are sure to meet with. True, they are men: as men, both classes are one: one in their temptations, their sins, their lot, their hope; with common capacities of joy and sorrow, equally with hearts to love and be broken; with a common rule of duty, living under the same levelling necessity of suffering and death. The difference is not in goodness—God forbid—nor in natural power, nor in practical judgement and wisdom. Nay, even with their scanty vocabulary, the poor are often, without knowing it, poets. The difference is between what one class *sees*, and the other *cannot see*, and, what is more, *never can see*.¹¹

The duty of the Anglican priesthood, according to Church,

was to commend the salvation of Christ equally 'to the Greeks and to the Barbarians', to the intellectual world and the world of untutored experience. The long period he spent at Whatley needs to be seen in this light. His solicitude for the uneducated country-folk of Somerset was as real as the concern which drives missionaries to go abroad and live amongst African natives. But he thought it also his duty not to become a barbarian in Holy Orders. The flights he made from Whatley were not so much a selfish escape as part of a determination to retain his citizenship as a European. In reading, too, he kept abreast of the main literary, historical, and scientific developments of the West in his day. The books he reviewed were not infrequently of Continental origin. For, if he made it his business to maintain contact with two worlds, he also endeavoured to make contributions to them both. From his rectory study he spoke every week to the reading public through the columns of the *Guardian* without ceasing to minister earnestly and simply to his local parishioners. That he made a more effective impression upon one public than the other does not invalidate the 'two-fold debt' which Church as a minister of God tried to discharge. The sociological implications of the Gospel, as he read them, meant the transcending of class barriers rather than their removal. Consequently, because of the political trend since his time, he gets less credit from posterity for his efforts than F. D. Maurice gets for proclaiming Christian Socialism and providing lectures for working men in London. But Church, striving amidst inequalities which he saw no prospect of removing, exercised a truly responsible stewardship; and he represents many others who have done the same.

The problem of how to hold any genuine conversation with 'the poor' cropped up as a serious topic in letters from Rogers and Mozley. 'I confess', wrote the latter, 'I fulfil my relations to them rather in the spirit of a debtor than that of an enthusiastic fraternizer.' The layman's conscience in Rogers forced him, much against the grain, to the duty of 'reading aloud to patients in St. George's Hospital now and then'. He found it very unsatisfactory and asked Church, 'Is there any medicine for such a moral diathesis?' The reply from Whatley (17 February 1857) must have convinced him that his friend was then very much the amateur parish priest:

After four years' trial I find it as strong in myself as ever, i.e. I know as little how to go about it satisfactorily, and still read with wonder and admiration any small book which describes the easy-going, glib, persuasive way in which the typical parson is painted talking to the members of his flock. To me they seem to live in impenetrable shells of their own; now and then you seem to pinch them or please them, but I can never find out the rule that either goes by. I think sometimes whether one ought not to give up reading, and all communication with the world one has been accustomed to, in order to try and get accustomed to theirs—but this does not seem a promising plan either. I hope that something tells, though one does not see the way how.¹²

This hit-and-miss procedure in the conversation between a country parson and his parishioners is, superficially, quite comical. But it has resulted in an untold number of frustrated lives amongst the clergy. In December 1839, at Camerton, a village in the Somerset coalfield, there perished by his own hand among the trees behind his rectory, the Reverend John Skinner, whose diary has gained him posthumous respect. A learned antiquary and a devoted pastor, he was driven to despair (as Virginia Woolf has shown) partly by domestic troubles and partly by misunderstandings with an 'evil race' of brutish parishioners. That happened to a studious type of rector only a few miles from Whatley. But Church, though somewhat of an aloof nature and not always at ease with his flock, had sufficient grace and good fortune to succeed where the unhappy Skinner failed. His earnest desire to win his people's trust might by itself have been in vain. Combined with it he possessed the saving gift of unworrying reserve. Parochial trivialities were not allowed to monopolize his time or drag him down. People appreciated his sympathetic efforts the more because they sensed that he kept it in his power always to withdraw to his family, his friends, his books, to places far off and to an interior life which graver matters than those of a parish were not allowed to invade. So it came about that, however often he may have failed (for all we know) to carry rustic opinion with him or to comprehend the Somerset mind, he stood like Hensley Henson amongst the Durham miners as the sort of person with whom, despite his small stature, 'no one took liberties'.¹³

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His daughter has left on record the impression made upon the Whatley congregation by the 'extreme solemnity and devotion with which Mr. Church celebrated the Holy Communion'. People who had heard nothing about the revival of ceremonial were not, apparently, lectured into the new fashion or confronted with elaborate novelties. The Rector's sermons were not designed to provide instruction in 'Catholic practices' but to give plain Biblical teaching based usually upon the moral authority of Christ. When his long country ministry came to an end Church had certainly not established the parish as a Ritualist stronghold. But everyone revered the memory of 'his slight figure bent in lowly reverence before the altar, giving the whole service a new and higher and holier meaning by his bearing and entire absorption in the act of worship'.¹⁴

The pastoral method which her father evolved for himself has also been described by Mary Church. He went daily to the parish school and with the assistance of Mrs. Church ran an instruction class in winter, two or three evenings a week, for men and youths. On the eve of a village concert he hopes 'it will do my wife's untiring work with her singers some credit'. The menfolk learned to respect a rector who, though ready enough to mix with them on the cricket field or take an interest in their gardens and their pigs, would not tolerate wife-beating or drunken brawls. Though capable of being remarkably stern, Church normally showed himself very gentle and considerate. 'By the old, and by the sick and dying, his visits were eagerly looked for. It was no uncommon request that he should come and sit by the bedside of the sick, watching with them till the dreaded "turn of the night" had passed; and in any case of sudden or urgent illness, or to a dying person, he would be summoned in haste—roused, it might be at night, by the sound of pebbles thrown up against his window—for they longed not to pass away without the help of his presence and his prayers.'¹⁵

It gives an unexpected glimpse of 'youth work' in the 'fifties and 'sixties to read of this unathletic pastor organizing regular paper-chases for the village boys, and going long country walks in summer time with the older children in search of wild flowers to be looked at afterwards through his microscope. Botanizing, a favourite pastime with many Victorians, interested Church the more because of his friendship with Asa

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Gray. Letters and parcels from the American professor reached Whatley at regular intervals. A Wellingtonia tree planted on the rectory lawn had been sent over from California, followed by an invitation to the Churches to cross the Atlantic and see the grove of its origin. There came also, enclosed with some seeds of passion flowers, an instruction to 'sow in April in your little conservatory, or in hot-bed, and you may have good plants for your purpose in June. . . .' In return, to remind them of Whatley and an English spring, the Grays could see snow-drops from the old country flowering in their Harvard garden, besides a cold-frame of primroses and violets. Amongst his learned publications the Doctor brought out a textbook of elementary botany and sent a copy to Church with a kindly message—'when your boy, who must now be five or six years old, if he has been spared to you, gets a few years older, I shall be much gratified if this little volume should interest him, and aid you somewhat in developing in his mind a love for the study of nature in one of its pleasantest branches'.¹⁶

This boy, Fred, whose delicate health had caused Mr. and Mrs. Church much anxiety, seemed to thrive upon the hard regimen of public-school life after he won his place on the foundation at Winchester. At thirteen he appeared to his father 'an odd mixture of childishness and cleverness, idleness and interest in work, affection and petulance'. Affection triumphed as the lad grew up; and Dean Church, who inspired many young men, found that he had no more devoted pupil than his own son. In the meantime he confides in Gray his thankfulness to have him alive. And besides Fred are his sisters—Helen, Mary, and Edith*—'three little girls, still of that delightful age when they have not come to dream of young ladyhood, while they have all the interest of life and quickness, which only mere children have for their dolls. . . . At this moment the whole party, with the boy at the head, are in the shrubbery, showing the effect on his mind of a recent course of Cooper's novels; and energetically following his lead, while he makes them "be Indians" for him—Mohawks, Delawares and Shawnees—and they have been pursuing on the

* The first two were twins, Helen Beatrice and Mary Caroline, christened together at Whatley on Easter Day, 1858. Edith was the youngest and does not appear in the register.

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war-path, tomahawking and whooping, and displaying the scalps they have taken, all the afternoon'.¹⁶

The following year (on Christmas Eve 1869) Church reports the arrival of Fred home from Winchester for the holidays—

a queer creature, with weak frame and languid health, and quick brain and tongue, whose interests are divided between his classical work, his fossils, and, in summer, his cricket. Just now at home the geological rage is at its height; every corner and every chair is covered with precious *Terebratulae* and *Rhynchonellae*, which, if anyone approaches (and it is hard in our little house not to approach them if one moves), he flies out in wrathful fear and distress, and objects to any one being touched. What the housemaid does under the circumstances I cannot imagine, except give herself a conscientious holiday from all dusting and scrubbing; and meanwhile the house looks like a place where people had scraped their muddy boots on every chair and table. But I am assured that the apparent mud is most valuable and interesting, full of wonderful remains, which are waiting their turn to be assorted, and classified and ticketed. And everyone pays deference; especially the young gentleman's sisters, in whose eyes, very properly, he is a great hero.¹⁷

III. SCIENCE AND LIBERALISM

Church had at the rectory a small laboratory in which to exercise his own amateur dabblings in chemistry. He also followed the news of scientific developments through the pages of the *Nation* and other learned journals sent over to him from America by Dr. Gray. He felt a sympathetic excitement when his friend got Harvard University to accept and house his beloved herbarium. Indeed, Gray received from him a subscription of five pounds (equivalent to forty dollars at the time) towards the scheme, and noted how much Americans were impressed by this evidence of the lively interest of 'a country parson, far away in England'. The vast researches conducted by the Professor into the new field of comparative botany made Church almost envious. For the work not only entailed wide travelling but offered the reward of discovering new truth, which always makes 'physical studies' compare favourably 'with much heavier risks and drawbacks in the more exclusively mental ones'.¹⁸

Gray, on his part, had other interests besides botanical

science. The voracity of mind which raised him to eminence from humble beginnings never outstripped his old-fashioned humanity or undermined his religious faith. He had been brought up on simple Protestant piety and could not quite stomach High Anglicanism when he met it. ‘But’, he confided to Church, ‘in England I should be a Churchman, although a pretty low one, at least in some respects; and I am a most hearty well-wisher to the Church of England.’ When he was in London he loved to attend either at a Dissenting Chapel where they used the Book of Common Prayer or else at an Established church where he could hear an honest Evangelical sermon. This makes the unclouded friendship between him and the future Dean of St. Paul’s of peculiar interest. The oddity of their relationship in the faith was charmingly brought out on the occasion when Gray and his wife found themselves having to make their own arrangements for worship while on board a vessel going up the Nile. Fortunately the Doctor had with him a newly-published volume of Church’s university sermons. As a result the Rector of Whatley was astonished to receive a letter telling him that on a certain Sunday morning in January: ‘you preached to the great satisfaction of your congregation of eleven, a very appreciative audience. We established a regular liturgical service. I was installed as curate; but Mrs. Gray read the first of your university sermons’, and the experiment was continued on the two following Sundays with the same congregation of ‘eight Unitarians and three Orthodox Presbyterians’.¹⁹

This was during Gray’s fifth European tour which began in the autumn of 1868 and lasted over a year. Before crossing to the Continent he spent some weeks working at Kew where he and his wife were guests of Sir Joseph and Lady Hooker. From Kew they went on a visit to Charles Darwin at Down and to Church at Whatley. That first visit to the rectory led to a further meeting in Switzerland the following summer when the Churches joined forces with the Grays for a memorable holiday exploring the Riffelberg turf for specimens of alpine flowers. Back in England in August, before returning to America, Gray stayed again at Kew and from there once more visited Whatley and Down. The mention of Darwin each time has some significance. When the theory of Evolution

broke upon theology, Church's attitude owed much to his having a scientist friend who was on familiar terms both with the theory and its author. Gray found the theory corroborated at certain points by his own researches, but he always maintained a good-humoured refusal to accept the atheistic inferences which Darwin himself and many others drew from it. As a Christian he saw no reason to reject the idea of 'a designing mind in Nature'. But while he chaffed Darwin upon 'the uphill work I have in making a theist of you', he felt bound as a technical expert not to oppose what he recognized as clear evidence. In all this he came to occupy, from the scientific side, a mediating position analogous to that occupied by Church from the religious side. In the controversy which raged during their time both men approached Darwinism in a spirit which (as Church said of Gray) 'took off a great deal of theological edge which was its danger, both to those who upheld and those who opposed it'. Church, thanks to his association with Asa Gray as well as to his own critical reading, had almost acclimatized his mind to 'Evolution' before most clergymen had even heard of it.* When the *Origin of Species* was published in 1859 he cast his recollection back to the review which he had written, fourteen years earlier, of the *Sequel* to Robert Chambers's anonymous *Vestiges*:

I believe [he told Gray] I must confess that I owe my first interest in the subject to the once famous *Vestiges*; and I remember thinking at the time it came out, that the line taken against it was unphilosophical and unsatisfactory; and that people wrote against it in much too great a fright, as to the consequences of the theory, and answered him more like old ladies than philosophers. Mr. Darwin's book, partly from the greater gravity and power of the writer, and partly from, I think, a little more wisdom in the public, has not made such an outcry. . . . One wishes such a book to be more explicit. But it is wonderful 'shortness of thought' to treat the theory itself as incompatible with ideas of a higher and spiritual order.²⁰

* The review of the *Origin of Species* which appeared in the *Guardian*, 8 February 1860, is almost certainly by Church. It is respectful in tone, attentive to the various technical issues raised, conscious of the vast foundation of research upon which Darwin was erecting so startling an hypothesis, but inclined to think that a full case had not yet been made out for accepting the author's final implications about the biological origins of man. 'Time alone and the discussion of the learned will set the seal of value upon his speculations.'

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If Church, influenced by Mozley, detected traces of scientific 'insolence' in Gray's other friend, Tyndall, he was charmed to note in Darwin an unworldly simplicity, candour, and the 'utter absence of bigwiggedness'. The American on his part was no mean critic of literature. Thus, through the course of a long transatlantic friendship, the minds of the two men exercised upon each other's work a cross-fertilizing effect.²¹

But the process of acquiring a hybrid mind is liable to be painful. Church found it so when he tried to combine his respect for new thought with a determination to be doctrinally sound in religion. His time at Whatley coincided with the heart-searching period when Christians first found themselves confronted with Biblical criticism. Unfortunately for him and his contemporaries the state of Divinity studies at Oxford in the 'thirties and 'forties had been no sort of preparation for meeting the blizzard of intellectual doubt which blew across from Germany during the rest of the century. But perhaps the very slowness of English theologians to face the challenge had its advantages. The Tractarian interest in the history and authority of the Church as an institution provided some semblance of a religious shelter and enabled many Englishmen to cling to traditional doctrines when Protestants abroad, with nothing between them and a discredited Bible, were exposed to the full blast of modernism or unbelief. The educated classes on the Continent, primed by Strauss's revolutionary *Life of Jesus*, became sceptical of the Scriptures long before the people of England; and even George Eliot's translation of the book in 1846 did not attract general notice here. It took the addition of Darwinism to arouse the Anglo-Saxon interest, as can be seen by the stir when *Essays and Reviews* appeared in 1860. That composite volume, however unsatisfactory, was the first Anglican attempt to meet the new theological situation. Church's attitude to it shows a curious mixture of orthodoxy and readiness to make rational adjustments. The tone taken by such a contributor as Baden Powell led him to consider *Essays and Reviews* 'a reckless book', despite many good and true things in it. The ultimate crux, he thought, was the amount of historical truth left within the covers of the Bible for men to believe at all. But, until critical scholarship had gone carefully over the ground and established that, it was premature for people to

be making large declarations on one side or the other. For himself, he told Moberly, he felt when consulted about 'these great and, as yet, almost unsounded questions . . . like a landsman giving advice on board a ship in a storm'.²²

The course to lay, as the best minds agreed, needed to be both critical and orthodox. And finally, after thirty years, when Bishop Gore and his collaborators issued their *Lux Mundi*, a new way called 'Liberal Catholicism' was respectably established in the Church of England. But Church's work (as a responsible critic of theology, though not a theologian himself) had to be done in the early period when the storm was at its worst.

It was not easy, amidst the stress, even for true men to distinguish friend from foe. That must account for Church's failure to appreciate at all fully the greatness of F. D. Maurice who pursued a prophetic technique of his own and sought to meet the spirit of rationalism by letting the Bible speak for itself. In the old days at Oxford, when Church was reading for his Fellowship, he noted that he found 'something in Maurice and his master Coleridge, which wakens thought in me more than any other writings almost'. But his estimate of him by 1853, when the *Theological Essays* appeared, had become almost disparaging and he accused Maurice of adding confusion to theology by wrapping his thought in a 'cloud of words'. Later, when he wrote an obituary of Maurice for the *Guardian*, Church modified this censure and paid tribute—though not a very adequate tribute—to Maurice's 'deep reverence for the old language of dogmatic theology' and his habit of distinguishing sharply between such language and 'the popular reading of it at any given time'. Separating Church from Maurice there stood the self-assured figure of James Mozley who even said of Maurice on one occasion that he had not a clear idea in his head, and that his reputation 'the instant it is touched, must go like a card-house'.

On certain judgements Church learned to dissociate himself a little from Mozley. He had to admit ruefully, after his friend's death, that James 'was a bit of a despiser when he did not like or understand'.²³ It is true that at the time of their Cromwell articles he himself had not scrupled to 'go off at score' in the cocksure manner which Rogers noted to be a

feature with Mozley when putting some victim through the hoop. But, whereas the merciless delineator of Luther and Dr. Arnold remained always liable to be betrayed by his own brilliance at marshalling ideas, Church learned early to 'cultivate the difficult virtue of justice'. Yet, if the Dean was the more sensitive and sure-footed, Mozley was the undoubted leader in matters of theology. He took naturally to the abstract questions of doctrine as the other never did. It was the more disgraceful that he suffered in the academic world as an underrated person who 'vainly knocked at the door for fellowships, till Routh gave him one at Magdalen, and who used to be thought of as a kind of waiter upon Pusey's charity for lodging and work'. But, all along, Church valued him and they kept happily in touch. Indeed, when the flow of news and friendly letters from the Oxford Observatory to Whatley Rectory was sadly stopped by the sudden death of Manuel Johnson in 1859, Mozley became for some years the main link. He had married the sister of Mrs. Johnson at the time he accepted the college living of Old Shoreham. Church paid a summer visit to them there in 1866, and they took him sight-seeing to Arundel and Petworth. He got quite a headache gazing at the collection in the Petworth gallery. Mozley was musical, but he stood aside characteristically for Church when it came to pictures.²⁴

The example which Church had set, during the ecclesiastical troubles of 1850, of going back into religious history to find the basic facts, was followed by Mozley when he started researches into the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration. His conclusions made him feel unable to accept the line being taken in this matter by the High Church party, and so in 1855 he gave up editing the *Christian Remembrancer*. Church, though he personally adhered to the tradition of his party, considered that Mozley had established his point, and congratulated him upon the completion of so vast a labour as it had entailed. What he chiefly felt was a deep regret that two mutually exclusive schools of thought should be so vehement upon an issue which was beyond proving. Commenting, on 2 January, he said:

I am very sorry for the result, yet it need not have come, if our friends had not stuck up for so much dogmatic certainty, and drawn so narrowly the limits of liberty of thinking. In the Middle Ages,

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and much more in the early times of the Church, there was infinitely more free speculation than seems compatible with Church views now. I think it must be we who are wrong. The nature of things seems more in favour of the old ways than of ours.²⁵

This was not the sigh of a latitudinarian. Nothing would induce Church to tamper with the Catholic creeds. But when it came to settling between rival schemes of speculation about the mode in which divine grace is effected, he felt the situation to be unreal. And if an appeal to history disclosed an allowable liberty he was not frightened of being called a Liberal on such an issue.

The fight for Catholicism, in Church's view, was concerned with the Gospel as recorded in Scripture. The real enemies of orthodox theology in the Church of England were the philosophical Liberals, represented in the ecclesiastical world by Jowett of Balliol and A. P. Stanley. Taking the Broad Church principles of Thomas Arnold, they had grafted on the cultural enlightenment of Germany. Convinced that dogmatic Christianity was bankrupt, they felt it their mission to save the essential amenities along lines indicated later by Matthew Arnold in his *Literature and Dogma* and *Culture and Anarchy*. The idea was to discard as much as possible the doctrinal and supernatural elements of the Gospel while retaining the respect of civilized people for Christian institutions and the moral teachings of Christ. It was a formidable threat to everything which Englishmen had previously recognized as religious faith. Time has since shown that people with a real concern for the Christian life instinctively trust orthodox theology, even when they hardly understand it, rather than what is offered them as Christianity in terms of a cultivated moralism.* On this issue Church stood out from the first as the champion of a plain and lively belief. His friendly regard for Stanley could never erase from his conscience the duty of opposing him. This comes out well in a

* A typically Liberal attempt to produce an inoffensive version of the Gospel was Canon Farrar's *Life of Christ* which appeared in 1874. The witty Mallock relates that, at an Oxford dinner, the author had complained that though the book had enormous sales he got no more than £300. A neighbour at the table was heard to murmur that 'in the good old days the same job was done for thirty pieces of silver'. (W. H. Mallock: *Memoirs of Life and Literature* (1920), p. 204.)

letter written (3 February 1865) to Mozley about Stanley after he had become Dean of Westminster:

What is this nineteenth-century religion for which all things have been preparing, and to which all good things, past and present, are subservient and bear witness?

I saw him in town last week; we went and drank five o'clock tea with him, and found him in great force. He showed us over the Deanery and had his historical anecdotes for each hole and corner. His wife is very pleasant, and nothing can be better apparently than the *ménage*. But he seems to me in the position of a prophet and leader, full of eagerness and enthusiasm and brilliant talent, all heightened by success—but without a creed to preach.²⁶

On the other hand, the times demanded something better than a wooden repetition of traditional doctrine. All Church's veneration for Keble and Pusey could not reconcile him to being an Anglo-Catholic with a closed mind. He came to sympathize more with the position of Frederick Temple, a man of solid piety who had no wish to alter the Faith but did expect to see it treated by his own generation with a certain intellectual freshness.

Religious thinking, as Church knew, would henceforth demand an intelligent strategy. What he desired, as he told Mozley when modernism first entered theology, was to see 'the real limits of the danger precisely drawn'. In saying this he was turning to one whom he felt to be qualified to do what he himself could not do. Mozley's reply took the form of eight Bampton Lectures, *On Miracles*, in 1865. When these were published as a book Church reviewed it at length in *The Times*. The warmth of his approval would not surprise anyone who knew that he had already made up his own mind as to the point where orthodoxy must be adamant. Indeed, the review itself—like not a few of his—seems equivalent to a declaration of faith on Church's part. Something deeper than Tractarian instinct caused him to endorse a thesis which refused to allow the miraculous element to be treated as though it were extraneous to the truth of the Gospel. For one of the prior considerations to be noted about Mozley's handling of his subject was the attitude of rationalized awe which he inherited from Bishop Butler. Church, therefore, as a student of that master, had the keynote to take up the theme for himself. The

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mysterious in Christianity—so he expounds in true Butlerian style—is there because it has to do with the salvation of a being who is a creature not of nature only but of a mystery beyond nature. Theologians need not consider themselves to be called upon to eliminate the miraculous from religion ‘till the last trace of what is moral in man has disappeared under the analysis of science, and what ought to be is resolved into a mere aspect of what is’. When God reveals Himself to us in the Bible the initiative is from above. A love which is transcendent in origin is likely to have about it marks which are startling and inexplicable. ‘A revelation in any sense in which it is more than merely a result of the natural progress of the human mind and the gradual clearing up of mistakes, cannot in the nature of things be without miracles, because it is not merely a discovery of ideas and rules of life, but of facts undiscoverable without it.’²⁷

So Church, using Mozley’s artillery, pounded at theological Liberalism. Then came what seemed a chance to strike a practical blow for the right. It happened that the Regius Professorship of Divinity at Oxford had fallen vacant. He wrote privately therefore on 28 June 1865 to Mr. Gladstone, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, to suggest the name of a person whose appointment might prove of great advantage to the University:

I mean Mr. J. Mozley of Magdalen, the Bampton Lecturer of this year. I do not know anyone who seems to me to have thrown himself into theology proper with so much interest and value for it, and sense of its greatness as a branch of religious study, and with so much originality and independence, and at the same time balance of thought and patience. He seems to me one of the few men, from whom a great and lasting work in theology may be expected.

This suggestion, reinforced by a similar one from Lake, bore no fruit at that time. Voices other than Gladstone’s had Lord Palmerston’s ear. Mozley himself remained none the wiser.²⁸

IV. TRACTARIAN OR TRIMMER?

During the ‘sixties Church’s influence, especially through what he wrote for the *Guardian*, had become widely recognized in religious circles. And some of his friends, anxious to count him

of their party, wondered where he stood. Two convictions, which superficially seemed incompatible, characterized his outlook. He was orthodox to the point of appearing old-fashioned, yet he welcomed the attempt to rethink and restate the Christian faith. Assailed from both sides because of this, he held quite clearly to the principle of adjustment. His Tractarian associates could not always appreciate the line he took.

In 1865, for instance, he pleased them by his review of Stopford Brooke's *Life and Letters of Frederick W. Robertson*. The powers of that famous preacher at Trinity Chapel, Brighton, did not deflect Church from saying that his rapid transformation from being a zealous Evangelical to being an equally positive Broad Churchman had an unhealthy look about it. And he took opportunity to challenge the popular misconception of dogmatic Christianity which Robertson did so much to foment. He had Newman and Mozley in mind when he declared: 'Dogma, accurate, subtle, scientific, does not prevent a mind of the first order from breathing freshness of feeling, grandeur, originality, and a sense of reality, into the exposition of the truth which it represents.'²⁹

But in February 1866 the defenders of traditional doctrines were profoundly disturbed by the welcome which Church accorded to *Ecce Homo*. Professor Seeley had sent it to the publishers as an anonymous manuscript; and Alexander Macmillan, much impressed by so candid an attempt to appreciate the mission of Jesus strictly in terms of his humanity, wrote to Gladstone: 'I wish much a really good article could be got into the *Guardian*. The book was written in the first instance I believe with an eye to the so-called "scientific men" with whom both at the Universities and in London the author has come a good deal in contact, but I think its reflective value on the Church might be at least as important.' Mingled with the outcry against *Ecce Homo*, both from High Churchmen and Evangelicals, there went considerable speculation as to the name of its author. Rogers even attributed it to Newman, but Gladstone rejected the suggestion. Between them they persuaded Church to risk his reputation with what he realized was a dangerous book to review. 'The critic of it, if he is prudent,' he said, 'will feel that it is more than most books a touchstone of his own capacity, and that in giving his judgement upon it he cannot

help giving his own measure and betraying what he is himself worth. All the unconscious guiding which a name, even if hitherto unknown, gives to opinion, is wanting.' Yet, while safeguarding the fact that the author's approach needed some complementary treatment to answer the question *who Christ was*, he came down favourably on the side of *Ecce Homo*. Church undoubtedly declared himself both a forward-looking critic and a humanist in the final paragraph which said: 'The book is indeed a protest against the stiffness of all cast-iron systems, and a warning against trusting in what is worn out. But it shows how the modern world, so complex, so refined, so wonderful, is, in all that it accounts good, but a reflection of what is described in the Gospels, and its civilization, but an application of the laws of Christ.'³⁰

The Puseyites, some of whom knew that Church was the reviewer, were grieved to think that one who had been a Tractarian stalwart should so fall into the Liberal heresy. The truth was that 'Liberalism' stood for more than one attitude of mind. For the Broad Church philosophical 'Liberals' of the Jowett school Church had nothing but opposition at any time. But in the academic and political fields there had emerged another sort of Liberalism which appealed not to speculation but to practical measures. The right of scholarship to have its findings treated with respect marched side by side in many minds with the political demand to widen the basis of social institutions. On that issue Church's sympathies went out to men like Goldwin Smith. He could never resist what seemed an appeal for justice. The matter first presented itself at Oxford on such specific questions as University Reform in the early 'fifties. Despite his natural conservatism and his nervousness about spoiling the old Oxford which he loved, he expressed himself as being 'on the whole a well-wisher to the changes'. In this he stood with Mozley and Rogers in a group which, supporting the Parliamentary candidature of Gladstone in the University, felt moved by conscience to accept the flow of Liberalism (as Mozley said) 'even in quarters most sacred from such intrusion'. The birth of this 'High Church Liberalism' in 1853 owed almost everything to the personality of Gladstone who was far from being a 'Liberal' in theology. Though not uncritical of his tact and judgement, the Oxford clergy who

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supported him at the University elections watched his political career with unmistakable traces of hero-worship. In December 1868 he became Prime Minister. Very shortly afterwards the following letter arrived at Whatley Rectory:

Hawarden, Chester.
Jan. 4, '69.

Dear Mr. Church,

I hope you will allow me to name you to the Queen for the vacant Canonry of Worcester. It is a personal satisfaction to me to make this acknowledgment of exertions which have, unless I am misinformed, sometimes been connected with my name. But I could not allow myself this indulgence, if I did not know that on every public ground your powers ought to be drawn forth from the double retirement of your country parish and your, if possible, too unobtrusive character, and that you have been a main agent in the endeavour made during the last twenty years, and until lately with success, to keep the University of Oxford in harmony with all that is best in the thought and movement of the time.

Believe me most faithfully yours,

W. E. GLADSTONE.³¹

Church felt it his duty to decline. He had got himself into an embarrassing position. For during 1868 he became publicly known as one who wrote in support of Gladstone's policy on the Irish Church. Its disestablishment seemed to him a moral issue 'like the old Roman Catholic emancipation contest', and Temple also took that view. But to most High Churchmen, learning nothing and forgetting nothing since the occasion of Keble's Assize Sermon thirty-five years before, the idea of giving up any territorial rights smacked of treason. For Church to accept preferment just then would have laid him open to suspicion. 'I found it hard', he told Rogers, 'to bear the idea of being held up as an example of the lucky High Churchman, who managed just at the right moment to pronounce in favour of what two-thirds of his brethren consider an anti-Church policy in Ireland.' His sensitiveness on this score went very deep. He inherited from the old Tractarian leaders a positive revulsion from the self-seeking and ambitious habits of the clergy.

Church's antiquated standards of priestliness were reinforced by his habit of clinging to friends with whom he could remain

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delightfully out-of-date. One such was William John Copeland, a correspondent who almost lived upon reminiscences of the Tractarian times at Oxford. With the passage of years both men were thrown together by their sense of belonging to a past generation. Thus, in 1866, after Keble's death, Church wrote to Copeland to tell him about the funeral scene at Hursley:

There were some seventy or eighty people, I should think, at the eight o'clock celebration, with *him* in the midst of us, once more in his chancel, and before the altar. At the service and funeral itself the church was crowded, and Rogers, Dean Hook, and I were glad to get a school children's bench in the corner. Yet it was a strange gathering. There was a meeting of old currents and new. Besides the people *I* used to think of with Keble, there was a crowd of younger men, who no doubt have as much right in him as we have, in their way—Mackonochie, Lowder, and that sort. Excellent good fellows, but who, one could not help being conscious, looked upon us as rather *dark* people, who don't grow beards and do other proper things.

. . . Pusey was there, but I am afraid very poorly, and not able to come to the funeral itself. But I did not see many faces that I knew, though the crowd was so great.³²

Copeland, a Fellow of Trinity and a fine Latin scholar, was one of Newman's curates at Littlemore before he settled as a country parson at Farnham in Essex. Though a staunch Anglican himself, he retained an unfaltering devotion to his old master and exchanged notes with Church whenever there was any news of him. The arrival of a book and a letter or two from Newman had been duly reported by Church in 1861; and then, to his great joy, there came on 25 April 1864 a request that he would look over the proof-sheets of the *Apologia*. Needless to say, Church gave his assistance unstintingly to what he regarded as a precarious effort on Newman's part to get the British public to judge him fairly. 'We must help him as well as we can', he told Copeland. And, because of their affection for him, no one could have been more gratified than these two were when Newman's classic vindication of his religious sincerity brought him success. But when it fell to Church shortly afterwards to review the *Apologia* he had to write not only as the author's friend but as one whose own reason and conscience operated differently. Of that we shall have something more to

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say later. It will be sufficient now to note that the renewal of their friendship, on a footing quite different from that which they had enjoyed at Oriel, proved entirely happy. In a letter to Rogers, posted from Whatley on 3 July 1870, Church says:

I have not had time to tell you about Newman's visit, which was duly chronicled in the local papers. It was very pleasant. He was very well and happy, walking and even running, though it was that very hot weather. I took him to Longleat, and you know how he lets himself go when he enjoys being out in the air on a fine day, and looking at what he thinks beautiful; and Marston and Longleat looked their best for him. He made himself quite at home with Helen and the children; with the children he compared notes about children's books, which has ended in their sending him, and his very heartily accepting, one of their books of nonsense, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which he did not know, and they thought he ought to. He talked very freely and a great deal; neither seeking nor avoiding subjects, but taking everything as it turned up, and becoming very animated at times.³³

There were current topics of inflammable interest to discuss, such as the decrees on Papal Infallibility and the prospects for Christian teaching in the light of Forster's Education Bill, but the glory is that they could be discussed. And this was so because Newman the Roman Catholic and Church the Anglican each had the requisite blend of charity and delicacy to enable them, as sharers of the same civilized life, to transcend a doctrinal impasse which logically ought to have made any real friendship henceforth impossible.

But Church was never quite so happy in relation to Pusey. Though their profound concern for the Catholic integrity of the Church of England naturally made them into religious allies, it sometimes looked like an uneasy alliance. The saintliness and scholarship of the Doctor were rooted in a strictly conservative mind. Church, though at heart still bound by the religious ideals which he learnt at Oriel before 1845, moved intellectually amongst the Liberals. The difference between him and Pusey showed itself painfully when the new Prime Minister nominated Temple to the see of Exeter in 1869. Temple had already incurred the wrath of theological diehards by contributing to the notorious *Essays and Reviews*. High Church and Low united therefore to prevent his consecration,

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Pusey even acting as Vice-President under Lord Shaftesbury on a committee formed for that purpose. Church, who regarded Temple as essentially orthodox and the type to make a good bishop because of his masculine earnestness and sympathy with the masses, felt the outcry to be unjust and very discreditable. It specially grieved him 'to see a man like Pusey, who is a man after all to rank with religious leaders of a high mark in all ages, casting away all the lessons of a lifetime. . . .' Temple proved strong enough to brave any criticisms of the Puseyites, but Church could not quite shed the fear of them.³⁴

His refusal of the Worcester canonry did not, however, save him from further ordeals. Rogers took care to see that Church's reasons for the refusal were known to Gladstone. Consequently there came another offer from Downing Street. But Church, in declining what was apparently some more important parish, this time (11 January 1870) explained his position to the Prime Minister:

I have felt all along and all the more lately, that my relations with my old friends at Oxford, and the line which they have taken so strongly—and I cannot say altogether inconsistently—makes my position difficult as to preferment. They think that what seems to me just and reasonable in present Church policy is compromise and trimming, and something worse: as perhaps I should have thought it 25 years ago. I do not think that clergymen ought to mind being called trimmers even by a great man like Dr. Pusey: but it is of consequence that they should be able to say that they are not time-servers. How will it seem, if people, with no great aptitude for public life, gain its good things, just as their disagreement becomes marked with friends like Pusey, who, unhappily have also taken to being suspicious of motives?

The one thing which we clergy have now to do, is to do what each can do, to stave off a great break-up. I wish to do what I can, and I hope to try to do it, wherever I have to do it. But my belief is that, with my antecedents, I can best do it, and exercise more influence, as I am now.

I hope that you will forgive this bit of egotism.³⁵

V. PAINFUL UPROOTING

Gladstone however knew that Anglicanism could hardly be saved by leaving the best men modestly toiling in parishes and

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college rooms. It needed a public policy with a demonstration of teaching ability such as the nation could see for itself. Vacancies at St. Paul's Cathedral, following one another in rapid succession, provided the ardent Prime Minister with an opportunity to establish a cadre of new religious leaders in London. First came the appointment of Liddon, the unswerving disciple of Pusey, to a Canonry in February 1870. Church wrote to congratulate him and recalled the days when they had both been friends of Manuel Johnson at the Oxford Observatory, little dreaming that a year later when Canon Melvill died Liddon and Gregory would try to persuade Gladstone to bring him into the Chapter. That appointment, however, went to Lightfoot. But Dean Mansel died in July 1871 and Liddon (according to his biographer) then sought to get Church nominated in his place. The offer first went to Hook, the Dean of Chichester, who declined it. Then, for the fourth time, the Prime Minister wrote to the Rector of Whatley—only to receive the usual reply. Strong reasons, said Church, inclined him to believe that his place of service ought not to be a public one. He had deliberately chosen his plan of life. After thanking his would-be patron, on 18 August, for so persistently seeking to help him, he ended with a humble request to be allowed to ‘remain in a position which was good enough for much greater men than I am’.³⁶

Gladstone, expecting something of the sort, had followed his letter by a telegram which brought Church to London to consult him and Canon Liddon. Never can a Prime Minister have had such a struggle to persuade a clergyman to accept the Queen’s offer. Liddon’s diary tells the story as it developed:

Sat. 19 Aug. 1871

Church arrived. He had declined the Deanery: but I think I prevailed on him to pause. We both returned to Mr. Gladstone. Church said that there was something at the bottom which he could not get over, a conviction that he was not meant for the place. After lunching there we parted in the Strand; he promising to do justice to our side of it.

Thur. 24 Aug.

Heard today from Church to the effect that he had finally accepted the Deanery tho’ with very great misgivings.

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Mon. 28 Aug.

Church and Mrs. Church arrived at our house at 11.30. Then luncheon. Then to the Deanery to call on Mrs. Mansel: she was much overcome, but was attracted by Church's sweetness and consideration.

They walked over with us after Cathedral and we dined at 8 quite quietly.

Tue. 29 Aug.

Church and Mrs. Church at morning service after which they spent the whole day at the Deanery until a late luncheon at 2, which over they returned to Whatley.³⁷

Back at the rectory, from which he had addressed no less than four letters to Gladstone concerning his scruples about the appointment, Church spent two melancholy months realizing what the break with his country parish was going to mean.

In a neighbouring shire, at Bockhampton, not many miles away, a young church architect who had turned author was at that very time completing *The Mellstock Choir*—a work which (when he renamed it *Under the Greenwood Tree*) first established him as a novelist of pastoral English life. A visit to Whatley to see the newly-restored village church might not have interested him much. But the parson who preached his farewell sermon there on 19 November 1871 touched chords of human feeling of a sort which Thomas Hardy himself appealed to with similar pathos, however different his creed. Very memorable, even in print, are the words which originally fell upon the ears of—who knows how far still pagan?—a handful of rustics. They were hearing one of those few sermons in our language which may be called great by reason of something more than oratory. Across the years we can almost see the strangely hushed congregation with eyes fixed upon the pathetic features of their Mr. Church as he stands in that pulpit for the last time calling up the 'rumours of great wars and the strife and down-fall of nations' which they could remember like distant echoes. For in his time at Whatley had occurred the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny and, quite recently, the fall of France before Germany at Sedan—events which had caused some of them to look up, as he said, from their field work when the news came down to Somerset. And, as the Rector's voice went on, they

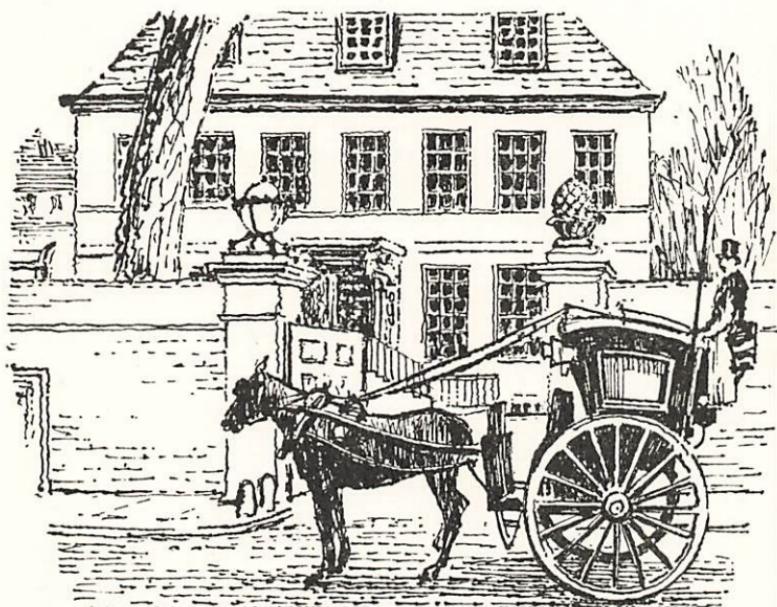
were reminded how, in their own parish, labouring men had for four months given regularly from their weekly wages to send help to Lancashire during the distress caused by the American War. Yet it was the small things, matters of no importance to the great world, which had most of all been binding them together for nineteen years and showing them for what they were under the eye of God. A sense that all had been marked and recorded weighed with peculiar awe upon the preacher as he now saw himself and his flock disclosed, despite their imagined seclusion, upon the stage of eternity:

My thoughts, and I am sure yours also, go back to many solemn and many joyful days; to festivals and weddings and christenings and funerals; to many a happy Christmas, and Christmas Eve, with the lighted church, and the holly leaves, in the dark winter night; to many a glad and peaceful Easter; to many a summer school-feast; to many a blessed Communion together. I think of all the changes in the houses of the parish; who lived in them once and who fill their places now. I see again the faces which used to be so familiar to me, which have now passed away. I cannot go along a road, through the woods or across a field, I cannot look out on a prospect, I cannot enter a house, but it brings back something—some bright day, some happy meeting, some fear, some deliverance, some heavy tidings, some summons to me to hasten, in the dark chill morning, or the late night, or the warm summer day—to some deathbed, to take last leave before it was too late. How it all comes back, through all these years, as if it was only yesterday. . . . And now it is all over. It is finished and done. Never more in this world will it be as it has been. Other things are before all of us now. For what is past, as far as we are concerned in it, there only remains the judgement.

So, parting from them with a kind of apostolic heaviness, he searched his conscience for the times when he had been neglectful or misunderstood or spoken hastily or failed to speak. ‘If any of you remember aught of this kind—if I have ever, by fault or unknowingly, hurt any, done them injustice, caused them offence, vexed or troubled them, or in any way done them wrong, I humbly and earnestly beg them to forgive.’³⁸

It is a modest utterance compared with Newman’s farewell oration at Littlemore; yet considering the difference of vocation between the two speakers, the comparison has some significance.

PART FOUR



St. Paul's Deanery

CHAPTER SIX

At St. Paul's, 1871-90



I. LONDON ON THE CONSCIENCE

BEFORE St. Paul's was built Wren had already completed the Deanery. Designed by one of his assistants, it stands to the south-west of the Cathedral and replaces a countrified residence destroyed by the Great Fire, after which the surrounding paddock was developed for building sites. The result is a town house which, though spacious inside, presents a forbidding aspect through being closely imprisoned by high walls. Here the great Milman entertained the intelligentsia and wrote his *History of Latin Christianity*. Thither, next, came the witty and learned Mansel hoping to pursue philosophical studies for which the atmosphere of Oxford was no longer congenial. But alas for his hopes. Only three years later Church with a sinking heart entered the same abode of gloomy magnificence, bringing from the country four consumptive children, and knowing that the prospects of literary leisure were for himself henceforth diminished. The spirit of the times brought new demands in the name of the public; and even a dean, however cultured, was expected to make himself useful.

At any rate in London. Church arrived when the development of the capital had reached its transitional stage. An old order and a new one existed side by side for some time. The removal of Temple Bar did not immediately follow the construction of Holborn Viaduct. In 1875, when certain districts could boast of trams, there were stage coaches still running from White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly, in the summer months. The dandified 'mashers' of the music-hall had seen their heyday, and the crinoline style for ladies had suddenly gone. The age of palatial hotels in the West End had begun, but the coffee-house was still the rendezvous for City merchants and brokers.

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Establishments like Sweeting's in Cheapside claimed celebrity for their oysters and stout; but Simpson's Divan, the haunt of chess-players, made its popular appeal to passers down the Strand—offering admittance 'by payment of one shilling, which includes a good cigar and a cup of coffee'. At dusk on a winter's day the typical street scene of the 'seventies and 'eighties was dominated by gas lighting and the rattle of hansom cabs. For though the L.C.C. had not yet appeared the Metropolitan Board of Works had opened up such new thoroughfares as Queen Victoria Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, and Charing Cross Road. The laying down of sewers was accomplished and the clearance of slums went on apace. The difference could be specially noticed in the Newgate area where, a stone's throw from St. Paul's, some of the most barbarous sights of London persisted down to Dean Mansel's time. Church was spared the uproar, filth, and cruelties of the old Smithfield cattle mart which had been moved out to Islington just before his appointment; and it fell to the Chapter to lease or develop sites behind Paternoster Row where the slaughterhouses of Newgate Market had been. Moreover, though Newgate prison remained in use, such scenes as Barham described in the *Ingoldsby Legends* had also become a gruesome memory since the last public execution in 1868.*¹

In fact, all about him the new Dean could see evidence of the social conscience at work to remove many of the degradations which Dickens, more than any other writer, had vividly revealed. And, underlying the righteous anger of that novelist, there lurked a significant comment upon the failure of the Church in the metropolis. Jo, the outcast crossing-sweeper in *Bleak House*, is ironically introduced to readers on the doorstep of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. At the conclusion of a later chapter the same abject figure appears again, ravenously gnawing some scraps of charity and 'looking up at the great Cross on the summit of St. Paul's Cathedral'. From that sacred emblem he derives neither hope

* The 'Hon. Mr. Sucklethumbkin's Story' in the *Ingoldsby Legends* is almost documentary history. Sporting parties, booking a room with a view at the Magpie and Stump opposite the ominous Debtors' door in Newgate Street; depraved crowds gathering in the small hours to watch the erection of the scaffold and await the arrival of the Sheriffs—these were details which Barham as a Minor Canon of St. Paul's knew personally from living at Amen Corner.

nor meaning; for to the likes of him it only conveys 'the crowning confusion of the great confused city'. To this judgement should be added the religious indictment penned by a clergyman at a time when St. Paul's Cathedral itself, quite apart from the condition of its squalid surroundings, was understood to give little trouble either to the Dean or the Canons. Kingsley, in his novel *Yeast*, describes how it appeared to a visitor in the 'forties—a soot-blackened edifice dominating Ludgate Hill from behind a grim enclosure of railings. When the afternoon service was in progress 'the organ droned sadly in its iron cage to a few musical amateurs. Some nursery maids and foreign sailors stared about within the spiked felon's dock which shut off the body of the cathedral, and tried in vain to hear what was going on inside the choir.'

Stung by that sort of criticism, a succession of keen churchmen set about to make St. Paul's, instead of a by-word, an inspiration. As with the capital, so with the cathedral of the capital, the aim adopted was to clear away ancient demarcations and open everything up to public use. In 1856, at the instigation of Tait, the Bishop of London, Dean Milman began to utilize the space under the dome for popular services. Soon followed the idea of removing the organ screen so as to bring the choir into full view. Having established the principle of treating St. Paul's as an 'open basilica', Milman launched an enthusiastic scheme for embellishing the interior walls with coloured mosaics and gilding. Gregory, appointed to a residuary Canonry in 1868, became enamoured of this idea of Byzantine splendour—and went abroad to look at St. Peter's, Rome, for further inspiration! So, under Dean Mansel the Decoration Committee pressed forward and Mr. Gladstone spoke at an influential meeting to raise funds. Canon Liddon when visiting Bavaria to see Döllinger in September 1871, took care to admire the frescoes at Speyer because (as he noted) 'it suggested what St. Paul's might become with adequate taste and munificence'.²

II. 'NOT AS OTHER DEANS'

Church with his special interest in Italy and Greece showed no wish to deviate from this consensus of aim. But prior to all

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artistic ambitions for St. Paul's there loomed a hard business problem to which Gregory had addressed himself very competently. Could the old chaotic finances of the Cathedral be put on a rational and adequate footing? It depended upon what arrangement could be made with the Ecclesiastical Commission. While still at Whatley Church had to begin grappling with papers left by Mansel concerning the sort of bargain that might be made. Beyond that, if it could be achieved, lay the further task of re-administering almost every detail of cathedral routine to bring about the efficiency and seemliness without which, as Gregory and Liddon had learnt, St. Paul's could not serve the glory of God. 'It is clear', wrote Church to Mozley, 'that what I am to come in for is very tough practical business, and that I am not to be as other Deans have been. It is to set St. Paul's in order, as the great English Cathedral, before the eyes of the country. I mean that is what Gladstone has in view....' Certainly there did not appear to be much scope for originality. He had come too late to exert any major influence upon the formulation of policy, but precisely at the moment to put into operation the master-plan of his predecessors and established colleagues.³

On the day of his installation as Dean, 17 October 1871, Church dined with the three residentiaries, Liddon, Lightfoot, and Gregory. These four were destined to make a happy combination of talents and dispositions. Claughton, a missionary bishop who held the remaining Canonry as Archdeacon of London, had not then appeared, but when he did he ran smoothly enough as a sort of fifth wheel in the coach. It made no apparent cleavage that, whereas he and Lightfoot celebrated from the 'north end' at Holy Communion, the rest were High Churchmen. Gregory, who had come under the Tractarian spell at Oxford, looked up to Church with reverence. Liddon made no secret of his relief at receiving a leader from whom they could expect full approval for the rising standard of worship at St. Paul's. Within two days of Church's arrival, Chapter resolved to have evening services throughout the year; to have choral celebrations at 10.30 on Sundays; and to have 8 o'clock celebrations on all Sundays and Saints' days. But the correspondence between Liddon and Pusey shows that they had some uneasiness about Church's doctrinal soundness at first. 'I

cannot help hoping', wrote Liddon, 'that that paper of his about *Ecce Homo* meant a difference of judgement, not a difference of principle with ourselves. He wished to make the best of a powerful book. . . . In practical ways his coming will help in this sense: that he will leave Gregory and me quite free, and indeed will sympathize. . . .' Towards the end of 1871 the Archbishop of Canterbury, urged on by the Broad Church school, favoured a move to make the use of the Athanasian Creed less offensive. Liddon, who opposed such concessions very strenuously, was pained to find Lightfoot on the side of the Liberals. But he wrote to Pusey (28 December), '. . . I have taken our new Dean into confidence and find that he is quite sympathetic as to this matter, as well as to most others. It is an unspeakable comfort. He will not help Stanley and Co. in Convocation.' It would have drawn an amused smile from Church, had he seen Pusey's grave reply: 'I am very thankful to have your account of your Dean whom I love, but about whom because I love him I have been anxious.'⁴

With two of the residentiaries holding university chairs—Liddon at Oxford, Lightfoot at Cambridge—and the other an archdeacon, the work of administering St. Paul's fell mainly on Gregory whom Church noted to be 'of cast iron'. On his very first day in office the Dean accompanied this stalwart financier on a visit to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to negotiate a final settlement. Mansel, before his sudden death, had got within sight of what seemed a favourable cash sum in exchange for the bulk of the Cathedral estates. All now went well and in March 1872 Chapter formally concluded a bargain which (as Dr. Prestige tells us) was to bring in £18,000 for the maintenance of St. Paul's; and the Commissioners provided £30,000 towards repairs, improvements, and restoration of the fabric. This successful monetary arrangement constituted the foundation upon which many reforms, long contemplated by Gregory, could thenceforth be put into effect.⁵

During his first year, amidst activities which others could cope with cheerfully without his assistance, Church felt very ill at ease. He did not begin to preach or celebrate until December, but before that had had more than enough business matters to engage him. His admiration went out to Liddon as he listened to his afternoon sermon; and he was relieved to

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know that his own utterance could ‘partially at least’ be heard. The pastoral energies of Gregory and Liddon, anxious for the souls of the young men engaged in the neighbouring City warehouses, had resulted in the establishment of evening lectures that autumn. The Dean was impressed by a remarkable gathering at which Liddon ‘spoke for an hour to seventeen hundred young clerks and shopmen’.

He learnt, too, that though he disliked platforms and public meetings, there were social occasions which a man in his office could not avoid. Later he rather admired the way the great City companies, in the gloomiest part of the London year, managed to enliven the season with marvellous banquets in their various halls. They were sights to see, with their old customs, crowds of diners, and show of plate. But after eating his first turtle and making his first speech at a dinner of the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers, he reported, ‘It is an odd mixture of intense bore and flashes of amusement’. And he added ruefully, ‘I have no time, no thoughts, and I have not opened a book for a fortnight except in church’. Above all, the increasing use of St. Paul’s made public demands a principal part of the Dean’s life. When Jackson, the Bishop of London, held his Primary Visitation, he had the clergy of the diocese assembled in the Cathedral. There were services for four days culminating in a charge in which his lordship managed to touch upon the authority of bishops, Prayer Book revision and violation of the rubrics, and ‘counselled the surplice as the preaching vestment’.⁶

But a greater concourse than that was in store. National anxiety clouded the last weeks of 1871 because of the dangerous condition of the Prince of Wales after an attack of typhoid fever. At one period things looked extremely grave. Bulletins reached the Deanery from Sandringham and, on 9 December, Church noted: ‘We were watching all night last night, waiting for the announcement which is sent from the Mansion-house to the Dean, on which the great bell begins to toll.’ But the Prince recovered, and to mark this happy deliverance the Queen consented to attend a service of public thanksgiving at St. Paul’s on 27 February. Church remembered the impressive spectacle of the Duke of Wellington’s funeral in 1852, when he sat in the Cathedral as a representative of Oxford University and observed

that 'the ecclesiastical part of the ceremonial was not unworthy' of so triumphal an occasion. Now he had the responsibility of arranging something on a similar scale. 'I assure you', he told his brother afterwards, 'I have been corresponding with very great persons, Archbishops, Prime Ministers, Home Secretaries and Lord Chamberlains—all, I was amused to find, just as if they were my oldest acquaintances. It is odd how soon one gets into the official trick, and writes without being afraid of their grandeur.' Tiers of wooden galleries, hurriedly constructed along the walls and between pillars, enabled the Cathedral when the great day came to accommodate a congregation of 13,000. A choir of 250 voices sang a *Te Deum* composed by Goss; and after prayers, an anthem and a sermon, the royal party were able to leave again within an hour of their arrival—thanks to the Dean's decision to make things simple and non-liturgical. The State procession with the Queen driving from and back to Buckingham Palace brought London to a climax of excitement. At night, amongst the various illuminations, rows of coloured lights studded the dome of St. Paul's like gems. This, we read, was a device contrived by the Royal Navy from ships' lanterns 'fitted with most powerful lenses, and calculated to be visible at a distance of three miles'.⁷

Perhaps in recognition of the day's success Church found himself, in April, again summoned to preach at Windsor. But this time, 'so as to enlarge my idea to the full extent' hospitality was provided at the Castle itself and he had the distinction of dining with the Queen and her Prime Minister. 'It was', he wrote, 'very solemn, but not solemn as I expected: people talked and even laughed, but not loud. After dinner there was a circle made round the room, and the Queen went round and talked a little with each set.' The next day in beautiful spring weather Church enjoyed a stroll through the Park with Gladstone who had migrated across to the Deanery, and the two of them dined there with the Wellesleys.⁸

Meanwhile, at St. Paul's, the plans and turmoil went grinding on. The organ, previously divided, was being reconstructed and the choir stalls removed. On this account the vast Charity Schools service—which had long entailed an annual suspension of worship in the Cathedral because it took weeks to erect and dismantle the special seating—was not held in 1872. Penrose

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the Surveyor had been set to work upon designs for a new choristers' school adjoining the Deanery. Negotiations were in progress to sell part of the cathedral yard to the City for street widening at the top of Ludgate Hill. But the matter which brought the Dean most anxiety, then and for several years, was the proposal for transforming the interior of St. Paul's. Before Church's time the removal of the organ screen had led to controversy whether a central altar should next be placed under the dome. Public opinion, supported by architectural warnings in certain quarters, became increasingly nervous lest St. Paul's should be ruined by developments contrary to what Wren would have approved. But the Decorations Committee had collected large sums, and the new Dean joined Gregory and Liddon in pressing towards some lavish introduction of coloured marble and mosaics. Their determination became clear when William Burges, a specialist in the exotic mode, was appointed to advise. The Lord Mayor of London, on behalf of many influential subscribers, wrote to the Dean a letter (which was published in *The Times* on 6 June) asking for a public meeting to 'afford them an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the appointment of Mr. Burges'. Church courteously but firmly refused to be browbeaten in this way. Not till two years later, when Burges had provoked a general outcry by the sample colour scheme which he exhibited at the Royal Academy, did the Dean and Chapter reluctantly drop him. Gregory lived to see a new scheme of mosaics actually carried out when he himself ultimately became Dean; but for the remainder of Church's time the matter lay in merciful abeyance.⁹

Only gradually and with great effort did Church reconcile himself to being Dean of St. Paul's, and his first year might—with very little persuasion—have been his last. He went to London as a dutiful experiment, fully expecting an early breakdown in health. So he confided to Asa Gray in a most wretched letter the week before his installation. He felt that he had been persuaded into the appointment against his better judgement, and foresaw with horror 'that tangle and whirlpool of ecclesiastical politics, in which so few people see their way, or are strong enough to meet temptations which are subtler and keener, and of a worse order than those of politics'. When he faced the prospect of business administration, of reforming

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the corruptions of an ancient institution, and of making public appearances and speeches, he could only tell himself, 'This is not my line'. A year later his actual experience of the place had done little to alter his dislike of it. He had tasted that reality, so bitter to a student—'what it is to be not master of one's time'.¹⁰

Newman could sympathize. Indeed he felt apprehensive of the harm which might be done to the rare and unspoilt nature of his friend by uprooting him from Whatley. In a letter to Lord Blachford he said:

I don't and didn't doubt at all that Church would do the Dean well. I was marvelling at him two years ago at the Frome Station, at his dealings with the railway porters about my luggage—he showed such quiet calm decision—but I want him to write more than he can at St. Paul's—(though Milman did write there)—and therefore I am sorry he is not at Winton or Salisbury or the like. And I grieve at dignities which have a tendency to rub off the bloom of the peach, which a country life preserves, and which London life, which the dome of St. Paul's, which the *aurata lacquearia* of the House of Lords, destroy.¹¹

Amongst the miseries of the Dean's first year as a city dweller was the lonely sense of not having in all London a single friend to whom he could go to talk over his private concerns. Of public discussions he had more than enough and was glad when July came and he could escape for a climbing holiday in Switzerland. There his spirits revived. 'Mrs. Church walked bravely, and the children'—Helen, one of the twins, and Fred on his last vacation before starting at New College—'scrambled up and found abundant edelweiss, and we were altogether happy.' But after their return Church had to make up his mind about London. For Gladstone, knowing the struggle he was going through, felt it a duty to offer him a release. Would he care to have the Deanery of Winchester now that Garnier, in his ninety-seventh year, had at last retired? Church was almost inclined to take it and so leave Gregory or Liddon to step into his shoes at St. Paul's:

Mells Rectory,
Frome,
Sept. 11. '72.

My dear Mr. Gladstone,

I do not know how to thank you for your consideration and kindness. Winchester would have many attractions for me. I have

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known it for many years and many dear friends have lived or died there or near it. And in many ways the change would be an ease and relief. But as long as I can without risk of breaking down, physically or otherwise, hold any place of this kind, I think I had better stay where I am. I am sure that there is no place in England of equal interest with St. Paul's for a man who comes up to it. I would gladly leave it for better hands. As you know, I think there are two men of our present number who would fill that great part much better than I can; and if you thought it would be for the public advantage that such a change should be made, I am sure that you will believe that you could not do me a greater favour than by saying that now is a convenient time to make it. But otherwise I had rather that things should remain as they are.

Thereafter he did in fact settle down to his London duties, and so fulfil the prophecy which Blachford made to the Prime Minister—‘If he is a little round and the hole a little square, I think a sound flexible material will wear itself into shape by working’.¹²

In Church's time St. Paul's, which had never been an ordinary cathedral, became for new reasons a ‘big ship to command’. A list of the physical changes achieved in that period gives no real indication of what this meant. The removal of railings to open up the west front, the provision of a new choristers' school, the development of Amen Court to house the Minor Canons, the repaving of the choir, the releading of the roof and improvements to the crypt—all such matters would have been put in hand anyhow. Of more interest to the Dean, no doubt, were the devotional use of the north-west chapel, the introduction of daily celebrations, and the abolition of all that used to be so slovenly and third-rate in the conduct of regular services. But the appointment of Stainer as organist to succeed Goss in 1873 and the establishment of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* as a regular feature of Holy Week were due mainly to Liddon and Gregory. What contribution, then, had Church himself to make?

People on the look-out might occasionally notice ‘a slight, thin figure glide in and out of St. Paul's, or slip low down to kneel on the floor in the Dean's stall’. He preached but rarely, and congregations went (it is said) to be able to boast that they

had heard delivered those thoughtful, unimpassioned sermons which it was the vogue to buy when they appeared afterwards in print. Clear of voice, but without gesture and insignificant in presence, Church had none of Liddon's golden popularity. He had no theology to compare with Lightfoot. Stubbs, when he came, was his obvious superior in history; and Scott Holland, later still, lavished upon the masses of London a personality and a crusading spirit such as no one else possessed. Indeed, it was a period when, as Wellesley said, St. Paul's had by the quality of Gladstone's appointments become 'a most distinguished affair'. Yet members of the Chapter themselves knew that the crowning distinction of the place was the man at their head. Harmony reigned while Church was Dean because in him the self-dedication of an exceptionally devoted team found its final expression.¹³

His very gentleness underlined the authority which belongs to a certain Olympian type of all-rounder who, like Edward FitzGerald, loves to appreciate rather than compete. It pleased Church to see Gregory producing order out of chaos in the field of cathedral management. No one more than he could sympathize with the prophetic orthodoxy of Liddon, even though he had reservations about his 'dangerous gift of epigrams' and tendency to take despondent views. He felt painful anxiety lest Lightfoot should be deflected from the fulfilment of his scholarly vocation. He busied himself as a fellow-enthusiast to identify certain historic manuscripts which Stubbs discovered in the Chapter House. He entered with a sense of mental adventure into the more audacious approach to theology which Scott Holland brought to bear in the 'eighties. He had more irons in the fire than he allowed anyone to know about. He never let himself be hemmed in by cathedral interests, but he took note of many details with a sensitive mind. A thoughtful piece of musical criticism occurs, for instance, on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee when St. Paul's had put on a special State service:

As Stainer says, Handel's *Te Deum* is heavy to modern ears; and I think it does not touch the tender and pathetic part of the *Te Deum*. But it is wonderfully stately and impressive in its opening. I noticed one thing which perhaps is an over-refinement. The least striking bit is the rendering of the verses concerning the Three Persons—

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'The Father, Thine honourable true and only Son—Also the Holy Ghost the Comforter'. It is not dwelt on, but run through—almost rushed through—as if it were only one verse. Well, when Handel wrote was just the time when Queen Caroline, wife of George II, was supposed to be countenancing the people who took the wrong side in the great Trinitarian controversy then raging. It would be curious if that influenced a composition which, of course, would be talked about in the court of the hero of Dettingen, 1743.¹⁴

The musical quality of the services, which formed a vital part of the imaginative programme at St. Paul's, attracted many people to worship. Indeed, Newman on this account once had a comical experience. He was staying at the Deanery and found himself at the breakfast table next day, left with another guest after Church and the rest of the family had gone across to the Cathedral for morning service. Feeling a sudden desire to hear Anglican chanting again, he decided to attend as well. The service had started when he got inside, so first one verger and then another went up to him to ask if he would like to be seated in a stall. At the third time of accosting he fled—and a few days later they were startled at the Deanery to receive a newspaper cutting which ran:

Last Monday a venerable white-haired clergyman, with rather shabby clothes and hat, was seen to make his way into St. Paul's Cathedral just after the service had begun. Presently a verger went up to him and said, 'We want none of your sort here', and turned him out.'

Appended to this journalistic scoop was a sly grievance in Newman's hand:

My dear Church,

On the contrary, it was a good coat and a new hat . . . I always make it a rule to dress well when I visit my friends.¹⁵

The Dean showed the letter to subsequent visitors with amusement. But he took care to write asking to be assured that the whole story was untrue 'for it would annoy and grieve me exceedingly that you should be treated so rudely'. Fortunately for the vergers Newman made it clear that the episode reflected in fact upon their zeal to be courteous rather than curt. There had, however, been a period when the truculence and indiscipline not only of vergers but of Vicars Choral and Minor Canons

had, because of their ancient privileges, gone far towards making the services at St. Paul's a disgrace. Reverence and discipline were only established by the Dean and Chapter after a long struggle. Before Scott Holland arrived the battle had been won, and it surprised him to note the wholesome dread with which the cathedral staff regarded Dean Church.

Sometimes they were all kept on their toes. In 1885, besides having one Bishop of London to bury and another to enthrone, the Chapter—like the custodians of other public buildings in London—had an anxious time because of renewed threats from the dynamite terrorists. 'We are living among volcanoes', the Dean told Blachford. During service he found himself listening with a kind of remote fascination for a packet to go off; and warnings reached him to be on the look-out for 'old ladies' entering the Cathedral with black bags. The alarm receded, however, and no damage was done.¹⁶

Canon Prestige in his book *St. Paul's in Its Glory* has characterized the Dean's mission as being mainly a pastoral one. The concern shown in the 'seventies and 'eighties to do something for the working population about the precincts made St. Paul's at that period a sort of parish church for the City. Church took a special interest in priests who had an aptitude for dealing with artisans. When it came to appointing Minor Canons under the new system the candidates were chosen not only to sing and assist at the Cathedral but, as he pointed out, for their work 'among young clerks and shopmen of the neighbourhood, holding elementary classes and generally getting to know them'. Any promising clergymen of this sort, including those who failed in their voice trials, were listed for preferment. He recommended one as 'a man of more than ordinary capacity for dealing with large places in the north'. Another who 'began life as an engineer . . . has worked up his parish wonderfully and shown great good sense as well as vigour in dealing with a very rough population'. The Dean himself during his first winter at St. Paul's began a series of historical lectures as part of the Chapter's adult education scheme on behalf of 'the large body of intelligent young men who followed their business' in the shadow of the Cathedral. By presenting them with such a subject as Roman Civilization he paid his Tuesday evening hearers the compliment of supposing them to be, potentially at

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least, comparable in outlook to university men. And who shall say that he was wrong?¹⁷

III. ISSUES OF THE DAY

Church by being himself and speaking his own language came to be known in circles where he needed to be known. Time proved that he had been mistaken in supposing a deanery not his line. Asa Gray rightly insisted upon the exercise of his mission to the educated. People expected to find at St. Paul's someone sufficient of a scholar and sufficiently urbane to know the measure of life outside as well as inside the Anglican fold. Milman took pleasure in befriending the rationalist Lecky. Mansel could be philosophically at home amongst infidel wits. Church, who once confessed to merely 'stunning myself' with Kant, was no philosopher, but could take his place without qualms in the Metaphysical Society. Though never an eager disputant, he was accepted by unbelievers as a churchman of a sort who is an asset to reasonable discussion in the big questions of morality and history. He could appear as one of a 'modern symposium' alongside W. K. Clifford in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*, and win the amicable respect of an anti-clerical like John Morley.¹⁸

One secret of Church's influence as a London figure was that he carried into old age the generosity of view appropriate to an ecclesiastic of literary interests. Things did not shock him simply by being not respectable. He learnt perhaps from Dante that the carnal offences of the publican and harlot are often less dangerous to the soul than what he called the 'sins of character'. 'I can conceive many of these poor creatures, whom the world speaks of as "lost", blindly "seeking after God".' It is, as he told a correspondent, the knowledgeable and well-placed offenders, the 'wise conspirators against human good and happiness, who are eminently the Bible type of the sinners who have everything to fear'. Victorian as he was, the Dean did not allow his moral sense to be stamped by a horror of sex. This appears in the opinion he expressed to an inquirer about the danger of corrupting young minds by letting them read unexpurgated classics. He thought that, as a rule, there was little to fear if children had been Christianly brought up.

The danger did not arise from books themselves which, if their general tone was wholesome, could be relied upon to carry young readers along without arousing anything prurient. In Shakespeare, for instance, the author's nobility of feeling and thought should override all that was evil. 'If this were not so,' he concluded, 'reading would be a dangerous gift. The dangers from books are not so much for children as for grown-up people—perhaps even the older they get.'¹⁹

In the matter of literary craftsmanship Church's opinion is interesting. He liked old authors with 'a masculine nervous strength about them' and 'a grip of the subject and idea, which brings out what it is and means, closing with it like a wrestler, and not fencing with it'. He considered that the taste for unadorned expression had been spoilt by the fashion for 'writing round and round a thing and playing a sort of sheet-lightning over it'. He confessed that he had himself never studied style as such, but he made it a rule to guard against 'unreal' and 'fine' words, to cut out useless adjectives and adverbs, and to rely where possible on nouns and verbs.* 'After all, self-restraint and jealousy of what one's self-indulgence or vanity tempts us to is the best rule in writing as in eating.' Church himself often falls into the rhetorical swing of a preacher, piling up phrase upon phrase to drive home what he has to say; but he rarely leaves the impression of being studied. In his letters especially he will sometimes repeat a word when a more conscious stylist would make some elegant variation. Often, if not always, this may be accounted for by a stern principle in him which preferred an awkward expression that was accurate to a polished one which was not.²⁰

This concern of the Dean's for meaning rather than manner helped him to the very end to meet new ideas without impatience. It laid him open to receive from the infectious Scott Holland an admiration for Browning. On a certain 'day of great joy and pleasantness' he joined a little party at 1 Amen Court, when the poet himself came down to hear the singing

* Rogers, who always played the part of a candid friend to Church, once told him in a letter—'I have been reading your Hooker by snatches. I like the preface very much, but I see that when you warm to your work, and involve yourself in a sentence in which you really wish to give force and vivacity to what you have to develop, you still run to substantives. I think you are quite right to do in your fashion what requires to be done best.' (*Letters of Lord Blackford*, 262.)

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of some of his lyrics set to music by a young amateur. As a septuagenerian, Church was grappling with *Sordello*—an enigma to the reading public at that day comparable to *Finnegan's Wake* in ours. On 9 February 1890, shortly before his death, he wrote from Dover to a friend:

Of course I have known Browning, in a way, for years, but I never took to him. I had not laughed at him, because I instinctively felt that he was a person to stand in awe of, and I hold it wrong to laugh where there are evidences of truth and greatness. But I am afraid I sometimes laughed at Browningites. Then came the *Ring and the Book*, and that, in the first place, satisfied a longing that I had long had, to have the *same set* of facts told and dealt with, not as they are in the usual novel or play—that is, with one side assumed to be the true one—but as they appear to all manner of different people, each with their own prejudices and interests, and rules of conduct and judgement, so as to have a little picture of the world judging the facts before it, and next, because I found in it such piercing insight into human realities of thought and feeling, into the depths and heights of the soul, such magnanimity, such pervading sense of the awfulness and certainty of Divine judgement. Of course there were things that I did not go with, but they were as nothing to the great picture of right and wrong, as shown in real men and women.

Then I had young people round me who read, and loved, and defended Browning, and found in him what their souls longed for; and they showed me such poems as *Ben Ezra* and *Saul* and the *Death in the Desert*, and *Abt Vogler*; and various things from *Men and Women*; and *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, and *Bishop Blougram*, and *Mr. Sludge the Medium*; and we read the *Englishman in Italy* at Sorrento. Oddness was not the word for much of this; the poet was writing, not in a grand robe, but in his shirt sleeves, and making faces at you. But through it all was the deep sense of truth, lighted up with gleams of beauty, such as did not belong to any poetry I knew. So I thought I would try myself on him in earnest, and I got *Sordello*.

Well, it was very hard and difficult—hard in making out what the story meant, hard in grammar and construction, hard in the learning exacted from the reader. But it was plain that it was written for a reader not afraid of trouble, and I accepted the condition. I did take a good deal of trouble, and read it many times, in many moods, in many ways, beginning at the end, or the middle, trying on it various theories, reserving what I could not make out, which was much, treasuring what I saw to be purpose, and meaning, and beauty, and insight. And so I began to feel as if the cloud was lifting, and though I do not pretend to know all that was in the

poet's mind in writing, I got to feel that I had something, and something worth having. And it was an introduction to the poet's method, to his unflinching view of life, to his ever-present sense (in which he is like Shakespeare, and in a lower degree like our modern *Punch*) of how much there is of tragic in the most comic, and of comic in the most tragic. He has dealt too largely I think, lately, in the presentation of the absurd. I think if I was beginning again I should begin with a serious study of *Paracelsus*, and then the Selections. . . . Browning has a poet's eye, the most comprehensive, the most searching, the most minute, for the truths of our present existence and our future hopes of any of our great names—Tennyson, Wordsworth, Shelley. And . . . a great poet requires trouble-taking readers.²¹

With members of quite different Christian groups Church's relationships, despite his definite Anglican convictions, were notably friendly at a time when such friendship was rare indeed. Dr. A. K. H. Boyd, who became Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, stayed as a guest at the Deanery and wrote afterwards as one of the most fervent admirers of his host. Another with whom the Dean enjoyed terms of real friendship and understanding was the Congregationalist leader, Dr. G. S. Barrett. Once, after paying tribute to Pusey, he received a message from Church rejoicing in the hope that a time might not be distant when the most serious religious controversies,

even our great and apparently hopeless controversy with Rome, may be carried on as if in the presence and under the full knowledge and judgement of the Lord of truth and charity. I do not expect that controversy will ever cease; but I do think that the time may be hoped for when a controversialist will think it his first duty, at the cost of losing many effective weapons, to put himself as far as he can in his opponent's position, and understand what he understands, and feel what he feels.²²

Church showed himself well equipped for the pastoral office in dealing with personal dilemmas. To fellow-priests who sought him out he proved a sympathetic adviser. To a lay person worried by the insoluble problem of evil he disclaimed any ability to go beyond the familiar platitudes. But his counsel, eschewing mere speculation, is typical of a mind dominated by religion rather than philosophy. Such mysteries, he says, form

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part of our total predicament and amongst Christians can best be reduced to a practical issue:

Why pain at all? It seems to me one of those questions which can only be expressed by such a figure as a fly trying to get through a glass window. . . . And what is the use of asking what we cannot know? . . . Or to take what to me is as much the crux of our condition as pain—the relation of the sexes, the passion of love; how strange, how extravagant, how irrationally powerful over all the world, how at the root of the best things of life, how at the root of its very worst? Strange, ambiguous, perplexing lot for creatures made in the image of God.

Of course this is only Butler again . . . here are facts and phenomena on both sides, some leading to belief, some to unbelief; and we human creatures, with our affections, our hopes and wishes and our wills, stand, as it were, solicited by either set of facts. The facts which witness to the goodness and the love of God are clear and undeniable; they are not got rid of by the presence and certainty of other facts, which seem of an opposite kind; only the co-existence of the two contraries is perplexing. And then comes the question which shall have the decisive governing influence on wills and lives? You must, by the necessity of your existence, trust one set of appearances; which will you trust? Our Lord came among us not to clear up the perplexity, but to show us which side to take.²³

He had an unshakable serenity. In every crisis of thought his interpretation of the Christian faith came simply to this—that the knowledge available to men is sufficient to make life good. Such a grip gave to Dean Church a field of influence which he did not have to seek. His place at St. Paul's served to ensure some recognition of his powers rather than to absorb them. At a level beyond that of cathedral affairs he often, for moral and intellectual reasons, held command without appearing to do so. People bewildered by major religious issues knew where to look for clarity and a sound decision. But much of his counsel consisted in refusing to give false comfort. Of the period when he held office it can be said that ‘there was no open vision’, neither was the ‘word of the Lord’ precious in those days. Who could dispel the cloud of uncertainty which had overtaken educated people in regard to the Scriptures? The year before he died Church confessed to Lady Welby that he knew no one amongst Biblical scholars capable of ‘revising the received belief’ of the Old and New Testaments. She had put out, and

sent to him, a paper appealing for authoritative guidance from those 'who teach in the name of Christ'. He could only state that the best efforts of contemporary criticism could not yet supply the new foundation which Bible study required to give it general conviction. Amidst that sort of darkness, which only began to lift after Church died, he felt that most of the clergy had better not plunge into disputes where they were incompetent to bring any real light. But, alas, people would insist upon discussing *Robert Elsmere* at their dinner parties and so forth.

Polemics are in the air, in novels and newspapers and magazines, and anybody may easily know what is the current question and argument and conclusion. No one can prevent it, and we know too little to regret it. But I venture to think that we shall find much virtue one day in patience. Patience does not mean inaction, and not talking does not mean not thinking. Without being a sceptic or an agnostic, one may feel that there are questions in the world which never will be answered on this side the grave, perhaps not on the other.²⁴

This modest, hard-bitten attitude to theological problems caused the Dean's reputation to wear well. He was, moreover, less liable than most of his generation to be shocked by new developments. The apparent impotence of Christian apologetics to do more than put up some negative line of defence struck him as being a kind of intellectual nemesis. To Liddon who, after long popularity as a convinced and most convincing preacher, began finally to despond about the trend of thought, Church (in November 1889) expressed his own lack of surprise. 'Ever since I could think at all, I have felt that these anxious and disturbing questions would one day or other be put to us; and that we were not quite prepared or preparing to meet them effectively. To us Church people the general answer was so clear that it made us think that they wanted no further trouble. . . .' Yet, however grim the present situation, it never occurred to him as being anything but a phase through which faithful scholarship would emerge to enjoy a happier day.²⁵

Leaving aside, however, the theological controversies of the reviews, Church had to contend with another line of fire continuously by reason of his office. The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's stood, during his régime, with that minority of

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churchmen who held that Anglican worship had a right to rediscover and cherish a liturgical form of expression which it found best calculated to declare the mystery and the glory of God. The ceremonial at St. Paul's could not be called elaborate, but it was of a piece with the whole policy of beautifying the fabric, ennobling the music and making every service a solemnity. Their aims and success in these matters were generally appreciated in London and made the Cathedral a model of good worship. But from the Broad Church side no less than the Evangelical there came hostility. Belittlement of the artistic and doctrinal pattern established under Dean Church once took the form of a parody—how Liddon did at St. Paul's, in the manner of *Kubla Khan*—

A stately preaching dome decree
Where orthodoxy's river ran
Through caverns measureless to man
From fudge to fiddle-dee.

Evangelical animus took the form of anger rather than pleasantry and its objection was mainly to ceremonial. St. Paul's became the scene at times of an anti-Ritualist brawl. On Good Friday 1885, when the Dean was celebrating in the north-west chapel, a man rushed forward with an umbrella and swept off the cruets from the credence and the sacred vessels from the altar. Gregory went in pursuit and Holland found him seated upon the offender holding him face-down to the floor. For fear of such demonstrations plain-clothes police had to be stationed in the Cathedral. An organized protest followed the construction of the elaborate marble reredos in 1888 because it included a sculptured group of figures representing the Crucifixion. To Church's distress this led to prolonged litigation and it was not finally settled in favour of the Dean and Chapter till after his death. These contentious matters, though in themselves incidents, were part of a very real and prolonged struggle within the Church of England. That Church himself became prominently involved was by no means incidental.²⁶

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Ritualist Battle



I. CEREMONIAL LAW AND LIBERTY

DEAN CHURCH's time at St. Paul's coincided with the most contentious period which the Church of England had known in domestic affairs since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In fact the heat of controversy into which he was plunged can be understood when it is realized that the battle for the undoing of Puritanism in Church worship reached its climax between 1871 and 1890. The story of the Ritualists at first sight appears sordid and petty, but it is historically an essential part of the struggle for religious freedom in England. Church, amidst all the miseries it caused him, saw it in that light.

Who were these Ritualists, these obscure clergymen whose names so often appeared in *The Times* and whose faces, depicted behind prison bars, occasionally adorned the illustrated weeklies? To the modern view they may present themselves merely as cranks, willing to incur popular odium by insisting upon certain long-disused points of ceremonial in the conduct of church services. Besides having lighted candles on the altar they made it a principle to stand, priestwise, at the centre of the altar facing east to celebrate Holy Communion, and usually claimed the right to wear Eucharistic vestments. For the sacramental elements they would procure unleavened wafers instead of household bread and mix a few drops of water symbolically in the chalice with the wine as a ceremonial act. Another revival was to burn incense at traditional moments in the course of the service. Such practices, taken in themselves, may seem nowadays simply picturesque or frivolous. Some people will find them an aid to worship, others an irritant. To an older generation it was a matter of ardent principle. Here was Catholic ceremonial. In that case, said the Evangelicals,

these Ritualists are trying to go back on the Reformation: they are traitors to the Protestant basis upon which the Church of England is established by law. Most of the bishops took that view. They were content perhaps to dismiss the claims of the Oxford Movement as being sufficiently self-condemned by the converts which it sent to Rome. Certainly it was easy to inflame mob violence against the Ritualists on the old cry of 'No Popery'. The riots at Exeter in the 'forties were, it is true, actually provoked by the order of Dr. Phillpotts, the High Church bishop, that his clergy should wear surplices. But much nearer to the usual direction of episcopal interest was the attitude of Dr. Tait during 1859, when he was Bishop of London, to the wearing of vestments or coloured stoles at St. George's-in-the-East. Canon Ollard has described how the riff-raff of the parish, consisting largely of Jews and incited by 'the owners of dens of vice whose livelihood was threatened by the work of the mission clergy', gave itself to an orgy of rioting and desecration which lasted many months. It did nothing to cool ignorant passions when the Bishop wrote demanding to be informed immediately of any clergyman at St. George's 'so dressing himself up that he may resemble as much as possible a Roman Catholic priest'.¹

This was but a violent instance of what had been going on in certain parishes before Church was appointed to St. Paul's. While at Whatley he knew very well the part which his neighbour, W. J. E. Bennett, the Vicar of Frome, had previously played in establishing the ceremonial revival in the metropolis —first at St. Paul's Knightsbridge and later at St. Barnabas Pimlico. Indeed, as the result of a dispute involving Mr. Bennett's successor at the last-named church, the first Ritualist case was taken to law. High Churchmen had contended all along that by re-introducing such articles as the altar cross, credence table, and candlesticks, as well as by wearing vestments, they were in fact obeying the strict letter of the Ornaments Rubric printed in the Book of Common Prayer. When the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council delivered judgement in 1857 the correctness of this view was affirmed. This legal pronouncement, much to the consternation of Low Church bishops, gave great encouragement to the revival of Catholic practices in the worship of the Church of England. It was,

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incidentally, an acknowledgement to the world that Tractarian scholars like Bloxam at Oxford and J. M. Neale at Cambridge had, by their researches into liturgical history, opened up a new conception of Anglican worship and one which it would not be easy for the enemies of Ritualism to assail. Tait and his like-minded brethren on the episcopal bench noted that the recalcitrants had won the first round at law. But they were convinced that legal procedure, when properly geared up, would serve as a sure means to crush any who dared to challenge the Protestant interpretation of the Prayer Book services.

Church from his country rectory was also watching what he soon recognized to be a fresh phase in the warfare which Keble had begun. Once more obscurantism and folly in authoritative circles were leading on to the persecution of a minority which had right on its side. Once more he was destined, by his sense of justice and his attention to the constitutional foundations of Anglicanism, to fight on behalf of those whose views he did not whole-heartedly share. As with the Heads of Houses when he was a proctor at Oxford, so with the bishops when he became a dean in London, Church proved a very troublesome opponent to deal with.

The omens pointed to what was coming when there appeared a volume entitled *A Collection of Judgements of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Ecclesiastical Cases relating to Doctrine and Discipline* with a Preface by Tait. Reviewing it in the *Guardian* (15 February 1865) Church first exposed the tendentious implication of presenting so important a subject as the Bishop of London had presented it. Then came his devastating indictment. Starting with the Gorham case, he said, a novel and evil thing had come upon the religious life of the Church of England, namely, the abridging as much as possible the province of theology by process of the courts.

Besides her Articles and Prayer-book, speaking the language of divines and open to each party to interpret according to the strength and soundness of their theological ground, we are getting a supplementary set of legal limitations and glosses, claiming to regulate theological argument if not teaching, and imposed upon us by the authority not of the Church or even of Parliament but of the Judges of the Privy Council.²

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So, with characteristic discernment, he came to the conclusion that behind the rights and wrongs of the arraigned Ritualists the real issue was that the bishops, supposedly in the interests of discipline, were letting lawyers put shackles on the faith and thought of the Church. In a letter to James Mozley (3 February 1865) he expressed his mounting uneasiness and wished they might have a talk together. From that time to the end of his life he retained this as a basic conviction—‘I do not like clerical judges’.³

Then came the case which encouraged the bringing of actions against Ritualistic clergymen repeatedly for twenty years. John Purchas, perpetual curate of St. James’s, Brighton, stood his trial for the wearing of vestments. In 1871, after an appeal, the Privy Council declared it to be illegal for the celebrant in a parish church to take up the eastward position, wear a chasuble, or make use of wafers and the mixed chalice. This resounding defeat to the cause of ceremonial revival, contrary as it was to historical evidence about early Anglican practice, and at variance with previous understanding of the law, touched Church with special force. First, though he agreed with Sir John Coleridge that it would be hasty for High Churchmen to welcome disestablishment, he felt keenly that the prospect of a split in the Church of England was being brought dangerously near when one party could feel itself to be ‘dealt with harshly and unfairly, sacrificed to popular clamour or the animosity of inveterate and unscrupulous opponents’. Within a few months of writing that, he was offered the Deanery of St. Paul’s. Before finally accepting the invitation to become head of the Chapter where two of the Canons—Liddon and Gregory—were known to be adopting the eastward position still, Church added in his letter to the Prime Minister:

I referred in my interview with you to possible embarrassment arising out of the Purchas decision. I have thought about the matter further; and it seems to me that I could not, on going to St. Paul’s, change the practice which I have followed up to this time, and which in Mr. Purchas’ case was forbidden. To change would, I think, be unfair to others in the same boat; and it would naturally be regarded in me as an act of weakness and cowardice. I should be very sorry to annoy the Bp. of London; and the last thing I should wish in these days would be to seem to defy the law and raise a

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storm on such a matter. But I don't think my honour would be clear if, under the circumstances, I shrunk at St. Paul's from doing what I have thought it right to do hitherto in my parish here.⁴

II. CHURCH MILITANT

By coming to London when he did, with the responsibility of setting a liturgical example at the cathedral church of the capital, Dean Church could not escape becoming an encouragement to all the Ritualists, however wild and irresponsible some of them may have been. There were unfriendly eyes upon him in high places on account of this, and not only in episcopal circles. He recalled, in after years, what it was like to sit in Convocation when Burgon, Dean of Chichester was there. That 'dear old learned Professor of Billingsgate', as he called him, did not hide from the assembly his dislike of

that 'thing called Ritualism'. I remember one occasion on which he pointed, with a distinctness which could not be mistaken, to our encouraging Romanizing practices (I forget the exact words) in St. Paul's, and while he was speaking, fixing his eyes upon me from the other end of the room, glowering sourly and steadily, like a schoolmaster at a naughty boy, whose demerits were held up to the Class without naming him.⁵

Yet in his personal practice Church was a very indifferent ceremonialist. For one thing he shared with the great Tractarians of the early period a primary concern for the doctrinal element of Catholicism and tended, like Newman and Keble, to sit lightly to the niceties of worship. With them the main business of a celebrant was simply absorption in the awful presence of God. Furthermore, his long period of rustication after leaving Oxford had kept Church out of touch with the new vanguard of Anglo-Catholicism. Not till he got to St. Paul's did he encounter the complications and variety which liturgical development had to show. 'I feel', he told Pusey in 1873, 'that some of these younger men, whom I cannot go along with, are so very much my superiors, and beyond my criticism, in their devotion and earnestness.' But he recoiled from the extravagance of some of their teaching and feared that 'self-will and hubris' would bring its own retribution. Writing to Precentor Venables (26 May 1874) he said:

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My own feeling is much like yours about such things as vestments. I understand the frame of mind which, partly out of special reverence for our highest service, partly out of regard to what I suppose was early, if not the earliest usage, makes men wish for them. But for myself, I should feel very uncomfortable if I had to wear them; and, indeed, I have never seen a specimen except the cope which our Bishop wears once a year on Trinity Sunday.⁶

There is a deceptive mildness about this confession. For things were happening which the Dean viewed with grave concern. Since the deciding of the Purchas case a deadly feud had developed and it was going to be a fight to a finish. The High Church party felt itself inspired to resist a policy of sheer injustice. There were priests and parishes prepared to provoke as much public trouble to gain liberty of worship as Wilkes had provoked for the freedom of the Press. Tait, on the other hand, had strong reactionary forces behind him and was determined to suppress the rebels. Having become Archbishop of Canterbury, he summoned the bishops to Lambeth in January 1874 to discuss the drafting of legislation for this purpose. Lord Shaftesbury had long been attempting to get a very drastic Ecclesiastical Courts Bill through Parliament, and Disraeli was ready to support almost any measure 'to put down Ritualism'. In the event the bishops were embarrassed by an excess of lay zeal which threatened to deprive them of the whip-hand. It was certainly without any reference to the Convocations that the Public Worship Regulation Act was finally passed and so brought into being a new court presided over by Lord Penzance. The effect was to put teeth into ecclesiastical law. Henceforth when obstinate clergymen disobeyed the rulings of the Privy Council there was this extra tribunal with power to send them to prison. Within a very few years four priests did pay that penalty, and the element of martyrdom which thereby suggested itself brought wonderful strength to their cause.⁷

From 1874, as the tempo of events increased, Church became the most determinative figure in the dispute. Normally he shrank from public controversy but on this issue he jumped at once into the fray. When the Bill reached the Committee stage in the Commons, and the authorities were feeling some satisfaction, a challenger thought fit to trail his coat. Howson, the Dean of Chester, wrote a pointed letter to *The Times*

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observing that it was only in recent years that the eastward position had been introduced ‘in any of our Cathedrals’. He asked on what grounds ‘this new ceremonial act in the Holy Communion is so persistently maintained’, and roundly declared that if it signified that the Christian priesthood was sacrificial such a view had ‘no sanction whatever from the New Testament or the Prayer Book’. This drew forth a broadside from Church, on 20 July 1874. Instead of arguing with the temerarious Howson he referred the whole issue to those fields of history and theology where adequate scholars had already been engaged:

The Dean of Chester thinks the ‘eastward position’ a novelty. Of the history of it I am not competent to speak; in my own experience I can certainly remember it as new. It is a novelty like a good many things in English life; it is new but not more so than the general rise of level in the conduct of public worship everywhere—not more so than many developments of thought and practice in the school which Dr. Howson represents. But as to the doctrine, of which, as he truly says, it is the symbol, that is no new thing, either in the Church universal or the Church of England. The doctrine that in the Eucharist there is a sacrifice to God, as well as a sacrament for men—a doctrine definite and real, a doctrine clearly and firmly distinguished from that of Rome—has been held without rebuke by some of the greatest divines in the Church of England. The fact is notorious to anyone the least acquainted with English theology. . . . Bishop Andrewes, Bishop Hall, Bishop Wilson, to take three representative names, held without a shadow of doubt that the Eucharist was a sacrifice. They held the doctrine because they believed that it gave the full and complete meaning to the rite. They held it because they knew what was the earliest and most universal language of the Primitive Church about the Eucharist. They held it, knowing as well as we do the cautious reserve of our formularies about it, and being all of them resolutely opposed to Rome, and two of them among the most formidable because the most intelligent of its assailants. They found no difficulty in drawing a plain and broad distinction between what is primitive and Catholic and what is Tridentine. It is true that there was another view of the subject. Waterland, the coolest and most dispassionate, as he was the subtlest of English divines, while fully admitting the facts, as a man of learning and clearness could not fail to do, respecting the early language about the Eucharist, gave a different explanation of it. But he debated the question which it is now sought to close.

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To this he added a piece of personal testimony which ought to have given pause to the advocates of repression. It told why a 'moderate High Churchman' felt moved, in the face of the new legalism, to throw his weight on the side of the 'extreme Right'.

I have [said the Dean] no call or right to speak for anyone but myself. Where 'Ritualism' means servile copying of foreign customs, arbitrary and ceaseless innovations, fussy restlessness about trifles, shallow knowledge, extravagance, superstition, disloyalty, insubordination, unjust and intemperate language, I dislike it and have never concealed my dislike. Where it means, as it often does, an earnest zeal for the solemnities of worship and the elevation of character and life, devotion to the service of Christ, care for the poor and the lost, indifference to prospects and preferment, then, whether or not I have liked its forms, I have admired it and have never concealed my admiration.

To appreciate the crisis it needs to be remembered that it searched the loyalties of churchmen to their very foundations. And, as usual, Church was found taking a line of his own quite uninfluenced either by friendship or party ties. Lord Blachford, his closest friend, felt that the Ritualists were making an exhibition of themselves through effeminacy and excess. Therefore, although himself a High Churchman, he determined that the *Guardian*, which he controlled, should support the operation of the Public Worship Regulation Act in the interests of law and order. Church, without any personal ill-will, differed firmly from Blachford on this policy and consequently wrote nothing for the *Guardian* from 1874 to 1883. In the correspondence between them the forward-looking nature of Church's view emerges quite clearly. He agreed with the liturgical aspirations of Beresford Hope, and thought the struggle that was going on was not merely an irresponsible desire for a 'fiddling and fussy' ceremonial.

It seems to me that this is a time when ritual is taking a shape which may be permanent, and that there is a chance, which never was before, of settling the outline and principle of an intelligent, appropriate, expressive, outward form or shape of worship, *within the lines* of the Prayer-Book, fairly interpreted. Of course I mean according to the ideas of worship which belong to the [Oxford] movement.
(7 Dec. 1874, letter to Blachford.)⁸

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About this period there burst forth a further controversy about the right of Anglicans to believe in the 'Real Presence' of Christ in the Eucharist. This doctrine, which had been fully vindicated by Pusey already, brought down a fresh storm of opposition upon Liddon as a result of some correspondence in *The Times*. The Dean was whole-heartedly on his side in seeking to maintain an English tradition of teaching which was positive without being materialistic. He might have known the result. Certainly he soon found his colleague, as he says, worried

with a great pile of letters, anonymous and otherwise, from all points of the compass, Roman, 'Ritualist', and followers of the *Rock* and *Record*, which have been pouring in upon him all this week. He has not spoken as he has done, without incurring the wrath of some of those good men like Mr. Bennett of Frome, who have contributed a good deal by their reckless language to our present difficulties.⁹

He had been over with Liddon, earlier in the new year, to Addington Palace at the invitation of the Archbishop to have an informal discussion with him about Church affairs. 'We went, and found him very civil and courteous, and though he talked the most, he let us have our say. Nothing much came of it but it was a good thing to have seen one another, and talked quietly by the fire in his study.' Tait, indeed, impressed them as being very conciliatory over the Ritualist affair. He wanted them to trust the new Court and avoid the need to bring matters before Parliament. He had no designs, he said, against the 'great historical High Church party, as represented by Bishop Andrewes'. Blachford, when he received this news, must have felt himself the more justified in supporting the bishops.¹⁰

Unfortunately the Dean soon found reason to fear that mischief was by no means at an end. On the eve of the coming into force of the Public Worship Act there was launched upon the clergy a solemn 'Declaration' by the bishops of England and Wales. Though couched in general terms and appealing to all parties for patience and forbearance in the interests of peace within the Church, this allocution was, in effect, a fresh onslaught upon the Ritualists. These, in so far as they could be

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shown to be offenders against the law, were due to be dealt with severely by the new Court in any case. Coming after this punitive machinery had been set in motion, the bishops' Declaration seemed to Church 'very much like the exhortation to repent and confess, addressed by the Inquisition to obstinate heretics, *after* they had delivered up the patients to the secular arm'. Accordingly he felt thoroughly roused and considered whether he should resign his Deanery in protest. A long and carefully-worded letter from him to the Bishop of London was dispatched on 10 March and a copy sent to the Prime Minister. After a respectful preamble Church fixed upon the bishops' reference to the mode of celebrating Holy Communion and came plainly to the point:

I ask myself then—Do I fall under the imputation and censures meant to be conveyed by the 'Declaration'? Am I one of those whom it will be supposed to point out to the prosecutors under the Public Worship Act as the right persons for the application of its provisions?

I am sure, my dear Lord, that, however much you may disapprove of things which I hold and contend for, nothing could be further from your own thoughts and wishes than such an interpretation. But I am as sure, that in the judgement of the majority of those, of whatever side, who feel any interest in the 'Declaration', it would be understood to apply to such as I am.

Under so heavy and unqualified a rebuke from those who are responsible for the government of Christ's Church in England, I cannot but consider what it behoves me, in conscience and honour, to do. You must pardon me, my dear Lord, for saying that though supposed to belong to a party now under popular odium, I do not, and never will, consent to hold office in the Church on sufferance. I claim a right as good as your own, or that of any of your Lordships, to hold that type of doctrine, from which, I am aware, so many of you dissent, and which some think so dangerous—what is called the High Anglican.

The Reformation of the Church was not complete until 1662; and I claim as my right that 'liberty of prophesying' which the divines of the seventeenth century vindicated, and which *all* parties in the Church in fact need in their deviations from the not unnatural one-sidedness of the sixteenth. If that right is denied me, I can be content with nothing less: and I am ready to wait for times which I am sure will come.

But, in the meantime, it seems to me that I have at present the

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choice of only three things—(1) to submit, (2) openly, and with most definite purpose, to oppose, or (3) to resign a place of dignity and emolument which the words of the Bishops will make so many of my countrymen think that I cannot hold without being a rebel and a traitor.¹¹

He gave his reasons for choosing the second course. He preferred to let the authorities prosecute him along with the rest. Of course they did nothing of the sort. To have put the hero of the 1845 veto at Oxford in the dock would have been very bad policy. And, in justice to some of the framers of the Public Worship Act, it was not men like Church they wanted to scotch. At least, in their muddled outlook, so they thought. He received an amiable reply from the Bishop of London, Dr. Jackson, who blandly affirmed that the Declaration had been impartially directed against the extremes of both parties. Gladstone, however, observed wisely to Church that ‘though the Act was *aimed* in the manner you describe, it remains uncertain I suppose in some degree whether it will work according to that aim’. The Dean, by not resigning, made himself during the next fifteen years a major force in ensuring that the purpose of the Act was in fact frustrated. His attitude gave to the Ritualists the support of a respectable name and strengthened their hand in the same sort of way as the accession of Pusey lent weight to the pioneers of the Oxford Movement.¹²

III. ARCHBISHOP VERSUS DEAN

‘There are good men of all parties’, Sir J. T. Coleridge once told Keble and Hurrell Froude. To which they replied: ‘It is a bad doctrine for these days.’ Dean Church, torn by the strifes of a later generation, would have been amongst those who recognized Archbishop Tait as a good man. Nevertheless he deliberately became his uncompromising opponent. For, as he declared, ‘the truth is, in a battle you must fight’.¹³

The first public clash between them occurred in 1877. Various offenders amongst the Ritualists were being brought before Lord Penzance for judgement. But feeling in the High Church party was specially inflamed when sentence of imprisonment was passed against Arthur Tooth, Vicar of St.

James's, Hatcham. In February, *Vanity Fair* published a picture of him behind bars and gave him, as Church observed, 'a rather friendly notice'. The Dean agreed with Blachford that the actions of this clergyman, considered in themselves, were probably indefensible. But that, he felt, did not lessen the blame of those who were doing enormous damage to the Church of England by setting the law upon such men. His friend Lake, the Dean of Durham, who acted as a kind of mediator between him and Tait, received from Church in March a letter telling him—'You cannot be more afraid of disestablishment than I am. But I am sure of this, that the Archbishop's trust in such Church law as now goes under the name, and his forcing on men's minds, by a policy of coercion, how much Parliament as it is, may claim to do with the internal interests of the Church, will not help to avert it.'¹⁴

In April, as a protest against the course of affairs, a Memorial was sent to Tait bearing the signatures of about eighty representative High Churchmen headed by the Dean of St. Paul's. The Archbishop invited the Memorialists to meet him, and on 22 April about sixty of them assembled in the Guard Room at Lambeth. Little good came of it, for about a month later the Dean expressed to Talbot his conviction that something drastic needed to happen in the Church both 'to frighten the Ritualists out of self-will and extravagance', and also to 'convince the Archbishop—what he does not believe—that men, who are not Ritualists, are in earnest and will not stand his policy'. He was thinking seriously of resignation; and only the gravest of public considerations, urged upon him by the Warden of Keble, persuaded him not to give weight to his protest 'by quitting the high position which I hold'.¹⁵

Matters again reached a crisis in 1880 when two more parish priests were sent to prison for contempt of court arising out of cases of ritualism. Proceedings against a third—S. F. Green, Vicar of St. John's, Miles Platting—resulted shortly afterwards in his serving a term of no less than a year and seven months. Apart from such dramatic instances there still smouldered the persecution of A. H. Mackonochie who had first been arraigned in 1867 for genuflecting, elevating the host, using incense, and so forth at St. Alban's, Holborn. Again at Clewer, near Windsor, where the Community of St. John the Baptist had

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been founded, the much-revered Canon T. T. Carter was a marked man without actually being threatened by imprisonment. With him the Dean kept in close touch, especially after having sent a memorable letter to *The Times* on 16 December. In that letter he challenged as a fallacy the view so often held by those who thought the law-courts the proper place for dealing with Ritualists, viz. that the Established Church simply meant 'a State Church, deriving all its rights, duties and powers from Parliament'. On such a view it was no wonder that people became angry about 'mutinous ecclesiastics'. But what the Ritualists and others believed was that the Church of England had not in fact been created by Parliament. It had 'an existence and powers of its own . . . something which the State, though it may claim to regulate, can neither create nor destroy'. The idea of Establishment, properly understood, derived from 'the old constitutional theory of a union of Church and State, recognized as well as violated in a thousand transactions of our history'. A hint that this might not be an academic matter was contained in his final sentence where Church observed that 'three fourths of the English clergy, if they are the men I take them to be, would refuse to accept a position which implied that they were the servants of a State Church'.

He declined to call a public meeting but his letters to Canon Carter at this time reveal that a new move was on foot to let it be known what a growing number of the ordinary clergy felt about ecclesiastical prosecutions. The stage had indeed been reached, though the authorities were not able to believe it, when Anglo-Catholicism had earned sufficient respect to be tolerated as part of the religious life of England. The Archbishop, according to Church's reading of the situation, had been misled by the newspapers and clubs into thinking that the country was behind him. For all his shrewdness he did not realize that the days had gone when he had only got 'a few malcontents and dreamers to deal with'. Why could not the bishops take the opportunity of convincing the clergy that they were not their enemies but their friends? Let them get peace 'by putting an end to all this law business' and standing forward as the 'upholders of fair liberty, and a reasonable and generous toleration of differences, even strong differences of ritual'.¹⁶

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Church, though anxious to see this plea of his put forth, would not undertake to make any personal approach to Tait. But Carter himself went and was no doubt able to convey to the Archbishop what the Dean's views were. He was kindly received at Addington for the aged Primate, beginning to sense danger, now adopted conciliatory tactics. What did the complainants really want of him? In reply, he received, on 10 January 1881, a further Memorial signed by Church and thirty-one others petitioning for 'a distinctly avowed policy of toleration and forbearance' and a 'recognition of divergent Ritual practice'. About five thousand priests appended their names to this document. The Dean himself was surprised at the extent to which indignation and alarm had penetrated amongst the clergy. 'I am quite sure', he said on 30 January, 'that if any man with a name had put forth a strong declaration, undertaking under no circumstances to recognize Lord Penzance or the rulings of the Privy Council, it would at once have attracted more and more enthusiastic signatures than our paper. There was a time three weeks ago, when lifting a finger would almost have been a signal for revolt'.¹⁷

As a result of this pressure the Archbishop persuaded the bishops to call off the anti-Ritualist drive and inaugurate what was called the 'Truce of God'. The Act of 1874 had proved a failure, and in order to start afresh it was agreed to ask the government, through Convocation, to set up a royal commission on Ecclesiastical Courts. Dean Church rather expected that, but had told Copeland it would only be a diversion. While Tait remained at Canterbury and Thomson at York he expected no real effort at reforming the Courts. Consequently he made his own tactical moves behind the scenes. In a letter to Gladstone dated 13 March he said:

There is a strong feeling among some people—I may mention the Bishop of Ely—that it is unsatisfactory to confine the Commission to the Courts created by the legislation of Henry VIII or modified since. Why should it be so restricted? Why not, as the inquiry is to be made, take in the experience of the Church at large on the subject? And if Courts are wanted, they may be wanted for bishops as well as clergymen. People, I think, would be assured if they thought that the whole subject were to be considered in a comprehensive spirit.

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Next, as to the Commission itself, I suppose the Archbishop must be chairman. But he is a very canny chairman, and manages business in his own way with great adroitness. But may I venture to suggest a few names?¹⁸

When the composition of the Commission was published six of the twenty-five members chosen came from this confidential list of ‘sound Churchmen’, namely: Benson, the Bishop of Truro; the Marquess of Bath (‘who will not be afraid of Archbishops’); Sir R. Phillimore, a much respected ecclesiastical lawyer; Chancellor Espin of Chester, and A. C. Ainslie (a proctor for Bath and Wells), both scholarly men; and—most important of all—William Stubbs the Oxford historian. Others may have been mentioned in verbal consultation. Of the twenty-seven clerics who gave evidence before the Commission five, for certain, were put forward by Church. In a further letter to the Prime Minister, 6 May 1881, he said he thought it would ‘give confidence, at least to one set of people, if some strong representatives of the parochial clergy had a place there. Unfortunately the inferior clergy do not feel their interests quite safe in the hands of their dignified brethren.’¹⁹

Tait had been dead eight months when the final Report of the Commission was published in July 1883. But he seems to have realized that the policy of harshness in dealing with the Ritualists had failed. Certainly in the last year of his life he showed typical bigness by changing his attitude towards them. In order to find some way out from any further punishment of Mackonochie, the Archbishop became party, together with the Dean of St. Paul’s, to a scheme for evading the rigours of the law. Four priests, including Mackonochie, were threatened with deprivation by the Judicial Committee; and to avoid an intolerable situation it was suggested that they should resign and be re-appointed elsewhere. Now the living of St. Alban’s, Holborn, where Mackonochie was Perpetual Curate, belonged to the patronage of St. Paul’s Cathedral. Church therefore, being trusted by all concerned, became the centre of a delicate intrigue to persuade both the Bishop of London and the unhappy Mackonochie to agree upon an exchange of livings between St. Alban’s and St. Peter’s, London Docks. This attempt to avoid persecution, save face, and restore peace, makes it significant perhaps that amongst the books the Archbishop

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chose for reading in his sick-room shortly before his death was Church's volume on *St. Anselm*.²⁰

IV. HISTORIANS AND LAWYERS: WILLIAM STUBBS

Although Dean Church declined to be nominated as one of the Commissioners he did give evidence before the Commission. He felt, he said, that diversities of ritual and doctrine within the Established Church ought to be compatible with uniformity in essentials. But when it came to setting bounds to liberty in these matters no judicial body could truly represent the Church unless it had the legislating authority of a spiritual body behind it. The position reached, however, was that 'there had been more questions of Church law ruled by the courts, say, for the last fifty years than almost any time since the Reformation'. He was not opposed to lay judges as such, nor to the principle that the State ought to hear appeals when the temporal position of a clergyman like Mr. Gorham was threatened. But so long as the final court of appeal remained secular, the danger was lest the Church 'should be made responsible by a side wind for decisions on doctrine or even ritual which really are not her own.' His recommendations, reduced to writing, were:

1. Arrest the tendency which is comparatively a new one, to govern the Church by case-made law. Guard against absorbing it by legislation, such as that which created the present Arches Court, into a department of State . . .
2. Restore to the Church, as required by the changes of time, the reasonable and just power of dealing with her own proper spiritual affairs, such as doctrine and worship, subject to the cognizance and check of the State.
3. Discountenance the spirit of persecution for which all parties have suffered, and for which all parties are to blame . . . and give to the different parties in the Church what each can fairly claim on the ground of documents and formularies.²¹

These principles amount to what may be called a constitutional outlook upon religious government. Gladstone and Church in sharing that outlook both felt that their case could only be made good by the appeal to history. Church had the historical instinct and was master of the general development of events at and since the Reformation. But the Anglican thesis

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he wanted to press required the services of a scholar specifically equipped for going more deeply into the material evidence. Stubbs, with his command of the documentary sources of English history, was just the man. To his Oxford professorship had been added a Canonry at St. Paul's in 1879, bringing him into contact with Church at a time when—because of Blachford's lack of sympathy on the Ritualist issue—such reinforcement was specially welcome to the Dean.

He conceived a warm regard for the pious but jocular Yorkshireman in whose learned achievements he may have seen fulfilled an academic rôle which he would once have desiderated for himself. Stubbs, for his part, was a convinced adherent of the neo-Tractarian school and looked upon his Dean with veneration as 'the archpriest of the English Church'. Before accepting episcopal office, and upon subsequent occasions when there was a hard decision to make, Stubbs first consulted his old chief. In 1884, for instance, it would have been to the chagrin of Dean Howson had he known that the new Bishop of Chester had sought Church's advice before deciding that whenever he pontificated in Chester Cathedral he would adopt the eastward position.

Three years before this, when he was appointed to the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission, Stubbs ought not to have been surprised that in the eyes of the two Archbishops he was regarded as being Dean Church's *alter ego*. The Dean admitted mentioning him to Gladstone but disclaimed the responsibility of having secured his nomination. 'Your name was in everyone's mouth', he said, '... I am sure you would have been on the Commission anyhow.' Nevertheless the suspicion about Stubbs was not unfounded. While the Commission was sitting he would report to Church the way things were going and request his guidance on the tactical moves to make. Acting with and through Stubbs in this way Church had the opportunity of bringing into play the line of reasoning he had employed thirty years before at the time of the Gorham case. When he produced his article on the relations between Church and State in 1850, he used the method of marshalling relevant evidence from old documents. That piece of pioneering remained the ground plan upon which the younger and better-armed stalwart of High Church principles was to proceed.²²

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This fact in no way lessens the personal triumph of Stubbs. His own ability, energy, and outspokenness made him indeed a key member of the Commission. He was soon conducting researches into such matters as the records of Convocation from 1529 to 1547, the heresy trials in England prior to 1533, and the evidence as to ritual and discipline cases dealt with in temporal courts since the middle of the fifteenth century. The appendices on these subjects which he supplied to the final Report form its most distinguished feature and (even allowing for Maitland's criticism) have won the permanent respect of scholars. Whatever the Royal Commission failed to do, the Dean was right in declaring—‘The hero of it has been Stubbs, who has worked as few men can work, and has won universal admiration and honour’.²³

In the course of the Commission’s seventy-five sessions, however, the constitutional historian was sometimes discouraged and very uncertain of his position. He had to learn that the appeal to history was not an academic matter to be decided on rational grounds. The opposition to it was deeply entrenched in the structure of the Established Church. Any attempt to build upon historical facts within and behind the Reformation meant a fight with the lawyers. And, as was clear to the veteran wisdom of the Dean, the legal mind is naturally Erastian. It worried Stubbs but it did not surprise Church to find Lord Justice Coleridge—a member of the Commission who prided himself upon being a good Churchman—impatient of his plea for research. When he insisted, amidst the complete silence of other members, that historical treatment of the subject must not be shelved, Coleridge said, ‘Do you not think, my dear Canon (for whom I have the highest respect and always buy and bind your books), that some of these inquiries you are making are rather beside the subject?’ Poor Stubbs stuck to his point but began to wonder whether he was making himself tiresome. What, for instance, did Lord Blachford think of him? The Dean, in a sympathetic reply to this question, was touched to find his confederate so landed ‘in a hard place’. But he complimented him on taking a stand, and added:

I cannot talk as freely as of old with Blachford about these matters, because, though I am sure as of my own existence that all he wants is truth and justice and the interests of religion and the Church, we

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have somewhat drifted apart in our belief of what these interests are. He is very serious and very keen sighted; but his want of reading and his eagerness, and impatience of a great deal that has been said and done in recent times, make him, I think, overlook important considerations, and so, though he is most candid, there is a sense of disagreement, perhaps more than there really is, which inclines us to silence. He is one who undervalues the bearing of the Ante-Reformation system on that which succeeded it. . . . But I can see that even he is moved by the picture presented in your paper of the activity of Convocation. He has never said a word as if he thought you too warm; and he certainly is not shocked at people speaking frankly to Archbishops.

I am afraid that another struggle is coming—practically between the lawyers and legalists, on the one hand, and those, on the other, who look beyond statute law to history and theology.²⁴

The trouble with lawyers, in Church's view, was their tendency to act on the intolerable assumption that English religion should be exactly regulated by reference to the Royal Supremacy of the Tudors. Other departments of the national life had come to enjoy constitutional liberation in the process of time. Why then should Parliament, inheriting the functions of the Crown, exercise over the Church a cast-iron control on the strength of claims made by monarchs before absolutism had been dethroned? 'We don't want to affront Parliament or judges . . .' said the Dean, 'But we cannot go on letting the world think that we acquiesce in the idea that we are merely an "Act of Parliament" Church.' But it was commonly believed in Evangelical circles that Henry VIII had created the Church of England, and that the Prayer Book, starting afresh from Edward VI, had given the nation a fixed form of Protestant doctrine and worship. Moreover, in the view of people like Lord Shaftesbury, appeals to the Crown were the proper means to enforce this standard if any clergyman should presume to depart from it. The legal profession was at hand to do the dragooning.²⁵

Even Lord Blachford, despite his Tractarian associations, showed himself essentially a man of law in thinking that the Ritualists had no right to resist the Public Worship Regulation Act after it had been passed. Lord Selborne felt the same. Church, on the other hand, insisted that laws enacted when one party is in power are not sacrosanct and binding for all time

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upon its victims in another party. For the suppressed party, though weak at a specific period, may conceivably find itself in a stronger position later. For this reason he treated the so-called 'Reformation Settlement' as comparatively fluid. Between the constrictive element brought into English religion by the Puritans and the exuberant element revived by the Caroline Divines there had been no stated terms of agreement. Opposing views and practices always managed somehow to hold their ground within the Establishment. It was nothing more than a tacit, if uneasy, balance of power. If in the nineteenth century the minority group had begun to gain ground, there was no inherent right on the other side to prevent it. By appealing to history in this sense the Dean was appealing to political reality. How could it serve the cause of justice, he asked Blachford, to start bringing in new statutes against the Ritualists in the 1870's? 'It would be Hanoverians legislating for Jacobites.'²⁶

That was the background of the struggle in which Stubbs came to take a leading part; and he was glad to have an experienced mind to lean upon. When he sought counsel of Church he advised him to embody his various contributions in a handy form of Memorandum because 'these people want to have "reading made easy" to them and all that can be done in that way, without sacrificing substance, is worth doing'. When Coleridge sent a subtle letter to explain the religious intention which governed some Erastian proposition of his, Stubbs was careful to enlist the Dean privately about the mode of reply. Towards the end of the proceedings, in order to make the Commission seem more unanimous than it was, Benson, the new Archbishop, proposed that the Minutes should not be printed. Church, when told, characterized it as 'at this time of day, a most risky proceeding, and not quite straightforward', and pointed out what the counter move should be. When it came to the final recommendations Stubbs felt disappointed that all his labours had achieved so little. But both Gladstone and the Dean had reason to hope that he had succeeded in bringing into public notice a case which would not ultimately go by default. Lord Blachford also had been impressed by Stubbs's contribution which, he felt, would henceforth 'render certain sorts of loose talking almost impossible'. His own recom-

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mendation, printed in the final Report, plainly implied that the Commission regarded the existing Judicial Committee as unsatisfactory. Church was staying with Blachford in Devon when he wrote (28 September 1882) to tell Stubbs of the suggestion which his host had drawn up about the final court of appeal: 'He proposes generally a return to the Delegates, and a sentence *without reasons* with the view of "lessening the weight and authority" of separate judgements, and so discouraging litigation. But of course the lawyers will stoutly resist what may make "this their craft in danger to be set at nought".'²⁷

The dislike of going to law in matters of religion commended itself to others besides disciples of the Oxford Movement. Westcott, a member of the Commission who was not at all pledged to the High Church party, aligned himself with Stubbs on this issue. He saw the danger, which Church had so long striven to emphasize, of binding Anglicanism to a 'case-made theology' produced in the courts. Seen in this light, the lawyers might well prove to be the enemies of doctrinal scholars no less than of Ritualists. It behoved theologians, irrespective of churchmanship, to join forces against the encroachments of legalism simply for freedom's sake.

V. CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

Yet the Dean entertained no idealistic notions of a Church entirely freed from secular authority. To his mind the relationship between Church and State under the Establishment, however strained it might be at times, was justified historically. Moreover, in the interests of truth and justice, it operated better in practice than any alternative was likely to do. After his study of Dante he came to the conclusion that by no other arrangement could the complementary truths, to which the claims of secular and clerical lordship bear witness, be so nicely reconciled.

The quarrel between the arrogance of the Ritualists and the arrogance represented by Lord Penzance, though it carried matters almost to breaking point, did at least some service to the Anglican cause. It drew practical attention to one of the slurs frequently directed at the Establishment, and afforded an opportunity of nailing it down. 'Remember', said Dean

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Church, as he concluded his evidence before the Royal Commission, 'that behind all these questions is the Roman controversy.' Within the conscience of Mackonochie for instance, there sounded the specious logic of Manning telling him that, if lay courts have the final say in matters of doctrine and ceremonial, then the English Church is the creature of the State. To provide an immediate relief to those who were worried by Roman Catholic (or, for that matter, Nonconformist) allegations on this point, there needed to be an easing of legislation in favour of the Ritualist conscience. But here, once more, the true answer lay in bringing to light the facts of history. The plea advanced by the Dean in his old essay on Church and State was again relevant. Let it be seen what had really happened in England during and before the Reformation. Set out in print what had been happening since then in countries which remained under the Papal obedience.²⁸

When Stubbs began to submit the fruit of his own researches to the Church Courts Commission he also recommended that they should consult Dr. Bright and the Dean of St. Paul's. The one might illuminate for them the earlier Christian period covered by the civil law of Rome; and the other the struggle for the Gallican liberties. Consequently Church furnished a schedule of notes to illustrate the course of French ecclesiastical law before the Revolution. The evidence from that quarter served, like Stubbs's, to give pause to those doctrinaire Catholics who seemed unaware that, elsewhere than in England and in a Church which accepted the primacy of the Pope, the interference of the Crown with matters ecclesiastical was 'continual, systematic and often tyrannical'.

In short, history showed no reason why the Church of England should expect to be spared the tensions which had everywhere characterized, and necessarily so, the relations between Church and State. The Dean took the realist view that religion and politics, if they are alive, cannot avoid either a state of war, or else an uneasy partnership. He once told Blachford he had no difficulty in agreeing with him about 'the fact of acceptance by the Church of State interference and control . . . I am sufficiently prone to scepticism to doubt all absolute theories as to right on either side. It has always been a matter of arrangement according to circumstances and the force which each side

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had.' That did not imply acquiescence. Ranged as he was on the religious side, he meant it to be understood that the Church should exert without compunction the moral force given to her from age to age in such formidable persons as Anselm and Newman—and Gladstone. As the first of these had shown, it was good for a nation to be reminded that an Archbishop of Canterbury might be 'something more than a venerable old man in rich vestments, whose chief business was to place the crown on the king's head, at the high tides of the year'.²⁹

Church sometimes felt amidst the Ritualist troubles that disestablishment could not be far off. If it came he knew that churchmen might learn some hard lessons by going into the wilderness. 'The privilege of being publicly recognized with special marks of honour by the State has', he wrote in 1885, 'been dearly paid for by the claim which the State has always, and sometimes unscrupulously, insisted on, of making the true interests of the Church subservient to its own passing necessities.' The whip hand, of course, was disendowment—an act of impatience and injustice which, if it came, would (he felt) bring evil materially to the Church and morally to the nation.³⁰

Surprising as it may seem to Anglo-Catholics, Dean Church refused to belong to the English Church Union and even confessed that he had 'always been rather afraid of it'. But he agreed that it was necessary to have such a fighting organ to defend High Church clergymen against prosecutions which the Evangelicals brought on through their organ, the Church Association. Whatever his detestation of party meanness, he was convinced that the party system ought to remain. Not only justice but also the interests of truth demanded, he felt, that minorities should survive and make their contribution. What he told Dean Howson illustrates his fundamental outlook:

I do not myself believe in the appeal to power in these matters [of ceremonial]. In the course of my life, in the early part of it, I have taken part in censures, and what is called by those subjected to them 'persecution'. I know what it is to belong to a party for the time disastrously shattered and sternly discountenanced. I have seen those parts of the drama changed all round and the mistakes of one side copied by the other; and I have also incurred the reproach of being a lukewarm trimmer for not joining in what others thought indispensable severity. But my experience has been that in

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each case ‘persecution’, as it is called, was both needless and fruitless, and that hopeless defeat has not prevented a cause which had the seeds of life in it from recovering tenfold strength.³¹

It is true that the experience here referred to is that of a Tractarian in days when things went ill for High Churchmen. It is also true that Dean Church’s personal religion was of the kind which is properly called Catholic. But he remained to his dying day a stranger to that sort of ‘Catholicism’ which lurks within the Established Church with the purpose of one day capturing the whole machine and purging from Anglicanism all trace of what is Protestant. On the contrary, he openly accepted the mixed character of the English Church, and realized the need for retaining in it principles adopted at the Reformation. The rôle of the High Church party, he would have said, is not to subvert the Anglican arrangement but to preserve in it those Catholic elements which are vital to the orthodoxy of any Church.

A nice question arises out of this. Suppose Dean Church found himself in a situation where High Churchmen had an overwhelming ascendency, would he then have fought for Evangelical liberties as he did in fact for those of the Ritualists? All we can do towards an answer is to recall that when Pusey in 1873 drew up a Declaration on Confession and approached Church for support, he refused to be one of the signatories. Although the Declaration ‘sets forth nothing but what I hold to be true’, he preferred that Pusey should have issued a cautious and considerate statement in his own name. And he concluded by saying:

For myself, I should always be ready to maintain the liberty which, it seems to me, the English Church gives on both sides. I am most thankful to those who, like yourself, have turned our attention to this great and once neglected remedy and medicine for many sinful souls. But, however inconsistent I may be called, I cannot go beyond liberty. I cannot seem to be on the side of those who, if not in formal statement, yet practically press for more.³²

VI. ARCHBISHOP BENSON

The sequel to the Church Courts Commission owed most to one of its members who, by the time the final Report was

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issued, had become Archbishop of Canterbury. Benson, even before he went to Truro, struck the Dean of St. Paul's as being in many ways a man after his own heart. His consecration in 1877, on the Dean's birthday and in his cathedral, gave Church a thrill of joy. He looked to Cornwall's first bishop, he said (in a letter to him just afterwards) to add lustre to those 'many victories which the revived English Church has achieved, and which, in spite of disasters and menacing troubles, make it the most glorious Church in Christendom'. The recipient of this missive probably did not realize at the time that the gloriousness referred to always implied, in his correspondent's mind, that Anglican bishops had to act constitutionally, and that it was the duty of their subordinates to keep an eye on them.³³

When Benson succeeded Tait as Primate he continued the 'Truce of God' and things seemed to be going well. Then, in 1887, it was rudely broken by the prosecution, and subsequent imprisonment for ritual offences, of a Liverpool clergyman called Bell Cox. This sudden and retrograde act on the part of Bishop Ryle so scandalized Church that he wrote to the Archbishop a letter full of such burning anger as only he could have written without impertinence. He was stung with grief that, amidst the obvious dangers of a break-up, one of the bishops should take occasion to re-inflict this sort of injury upon the Church. Moreover, what Christendom at large could not fail to note, he said, was 'that while Mr. Bell Cox goes to prison for having lighted candles, and mixed water with the wine, dignified clergy of the Church can make open questions of the personality of God—the fact of the Resurrection, and the promise of immortality'. Yet, he added, though he considered infidelity and heresy among priests to be far greater faults, 'I should be sorry to see even such things put down by courts of law. Their true enemies, their true antidotes, are not judicial sentences, but Christian ideas, not only in discussion, but in life and action; as long as these ideas can command enthusiasm and self-sacrifice, they will do what arguments cannot do, and much less, force.' It desolated him to see that, by the folly of those called to be lords spiritual, the lawyers had again been unleashed.³⁴

Benson was not unmindful of the scandal, but an Archbishop

of Canterbury can only proceed within his powers and opportunities. Opportunity did come when the Church Association, out for blood, brought forward a supreme case by accusing the Bishop of Lincoln, the saintly Edward King, of transgressing as a Ritualist. The Archbishop then took steps which proved that the humiliations revealed by the Church Courts Commission had deeply impressed him. Proceeding astutely and on careful advice, he took the case into his personal jurisdiction as Metropolitan. This step had a critical reception in thoughtful circles. One of the senior bishops, Mackarness, referred to it as 'a Canterbury Papacy'.³⁵

There was some slight precedent to justify reviving the Archepiscopal Court for the trial of a bishop; and the Crown advisers, when consulted, supported this procedure. Gladstone and Church, however, felt very doubtful about the constitutional right of the Primate in 'this awkward but dangerous question'. In June 1888 the Dean wrote to Bishop Stubbs, as one of 'those who know', requesting him to use his knowledge to keep Benson in the right track because 'a mistake on the Archbishop's part would be a serious matter'. The following January, soon after being elected Bishop of Oxford, Stubbs received a strong request from the Archbishop asking him to sit as one of his assessors in the hearing of the case. He wrote to the Dean for advice what to do under further pressure, since he had already replied asking to be excused and informing his Grace that 'my disbelief in the constitutional competency of his Court disqualifies me from honestly acting as a member of it'. Church, who was at Torquay sheltering from the winter, telegraphed an answer, then sent a letter to say:

If anything is certain, it is that all England would be perplexed if your name was not among the Archbishop's assessors, if there are to be any assessors at all. I think you were quite right in stating clearly your objections to the whole thing. The Archbishop knows your mind, and what he is doing in asking you. If he repeats his invitation, and you decline, I think he might say that he was deserted at an extreme point by those on whose help he had a right to count, even if they did not agree with him.

I know, my dear Bishop, that I am laying a burden on you, which I should very likely try to escape from if the case was mine. But, as far as I can see, I think I am advising right. I do not venture to say

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that you may prevent mischief, or do any good—that will be as it may be. But I do not think that you could safely say No to a second application from the Archbishop. Your refusal would be turned into an apology, *beforehand*, for anything that went wrong. (11 Jan. 1889.)³⁶

Stubbs yielded to this reasoning, and when the trial began took his place helpfully, but with entirely passive intentions, as one of the assessors. The facetious scribblings with which he relieved his feelings from time to time in the course of the proceedings are of the sort which Swift would have approved. But the outcome of the hearing was far from being a Gilbertian fiasco. The Archbishop's judgement, given on 21 November 1890, amounted to an acquittal of Bishop King on such essential points as altar lights and the eastward position: even the mixed chalice was in some sense allowed. The handling of the case met with general approval throughout the country. To Benson indeed belongs the credit for so effectively bringing to an end the era of persecutions and muddled litigation which began with the Purchas case nineteen years before. Dean Church, whose public life from the day of his coming to St. Paul's had been largely dominated by this bitter struggle, just lived to hear the good news and utter his *Nunc Dimitis*. 'It is', he said, with profound happiness, 'the most courageous thing that has come from Lambeth for the last two hundred years.'³⁷

Yet, broadly considered, the judgement marked a triumph not so much for Benson personally, or for Bishop King and the High Church party, as for that freeing of Anglicanism for which no man had striven with such a combination of courage and sound principles as Church. And a significant point in the Lincoln case, quite apart from the verdict, was that judgements of the Privy Council had been reversed by admitting the validity of historical considerations. The appeal to history, no less than the demand for justice, had begun to bear fruit in the worshipping life of the English Church—so fulfilling the faith of one who, in preparation for the era of Stubbs, had been a pioneer in making it.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Gladstone Partnership



I. PATRONAGE AND PARTY

THE pressure which Dean Church brought to bear upon ecclesiastical affairs derived both from his personal authority and from the support of Gladstone. The Liberal leader of the second half of the century was also the leading layman of the High Church party, and he held office as Prime Minister three times during the period that Church was at St. Paul's. When he resigned in 1874, at the end of his first administration, the Queen accused him of favouring with preferment the sort of clerics who, in her view, had leanings towards Rome. Others repeated the charge from time to time and in 1883 Gladstone quoted statistics to show that, if anything, the High Churchmen got the worst of it as to the emoluments and the number of places he offered them. In fact, no Prime Minister ever exercised ecclesiastical patronage so laboriously and so much as a matter of conscience. Mary Gladstone, to assist her father, made careful files about the qualifications of clergymen and kept them in a special cupboard at No. 10 Downing Street. Correspondence which has been preserved throws much light upon the careful inquiries he made not only when vacancies occurred but also in advance. A bishop had only to be ill for some weeks, and steps would be taken to draw up a list of possible successors. On this side of his policy, Mr. Gladstone had more than one adviser but, especially between 1880 and 1886 when he held office as Prime Minister for the second time, he turned for assistance mainly to Dean Church. 'There is no one', he told a correspondent in 1878, 'whose ultimate judgement would carry more weight with me.'¹

Church was a party man, honourably so, and he had come to know what party influence meant. In 1863, while he was at Whatley, the chair of Ecclesiastical History fell vacant at

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Oxford. Matthew Arnold as well as Frederic Rogers felt that he should have had it, and Gladstone recommended his appointment. But Palmerston, who was Prime Minister at the time, took Lord Shaftesbury's nominee instead. This, which he dismissed lightly as 'my small piece of ambition' was the only preferment Church ever confessed a desire for. Henceforth his concern about academic standards took the form of pulling wires for other men. Mention has already been made of his attempt to get James Mozley made Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford in 1865. But again the party interest was against it. The voices of Shaftesbury and the Bishop of Peterborough prevailed, and the chair went to an Orientalist who happened also to be an Evangelical, Robert Payne Smith. So, all through the years of the 'Derby and Dizzy bishops' even the most moderate High Churchmen were excluded from office. Gladstone noted these things and determined one day to redress the balance. Amongst his first acts, when he became Prime Minister, were to make Moberly Bishop of Salisbury and Liddon a Canon of St. Paul's, after first defying a public outcry in 1869 by sending Temple to Exeter. The see of Oxford had also to be filled, and Church's was one of the two names which originally occurred to him in connexion with it. Wellesley, when consulted about this, declared his preference for Church who 'would be a most *safe* appointment—if in that slender bodily frame he has work enough'. It was a sensible proviso; and the offer, if made, would almost certainly have been turned down like others before it. The place actually fell to the able and moderate Mackarness. It needed, indeed, much consultation between Gladstone and Lord Granville at this time to make some sort of appearance of holding the balance amongst announcements which, especially in Temple's case, were expected to cause controversy. Church himself noted with added glee the adroitness of the means next taken to give Mozley at last the Professorship suggested for him five years before. He wrote from Whatley Rectory, 30 January 1871:

My dear Rogers,

What do you think of Gladstone's ingenious manipulation? It seems to me masterly; only one cannot say so. You observe he not only clears off Payne Smith at Oxford, where he is far too weak for his place (he is a legacy of Jeune and Pam.) but he *shelves* him—for

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no-one will care to promote him further [*sc.* from his new post as Dean of Canterbury] and if he had been let stay on he would have been gaining a kind of title to be a Bishop, which would have been a misfortune. Sooner or later, he must have been promoted, so it is as well that it should be sooner, and there he can't do much harm —And then as to Oxford, if Mozley will not be a very popular Professor, he will be a really strong one, and strength is sadly wanted in the ranks of Divinity Professors there just now, compared with the secular Professors.²

When the tide began to turn thus in the pro-Tractarian direction Church himself had not quite reached the supreme place which he later occupied as Gladstone's regular confidant. Gerald Wellesley retained that office; and, because of his access to the Queen, he never failed to supply moderating counsels whenever the possibility of a risky appointment occurred. The Prime Minister knew that his old friend, in contrast to Dean Church, tended to side with the Queen by inclination as well as by duty in matters of churchmanship. At the beginning of the 'eighties, therefore, when the Ritualist controversy was raging at its fiercest over the imprisonment of the Reverend S. F. Green, Gladstone found himself being pulled one way by the advice of the Dean of Windsor and another by the Dean of St. Paul's. In October 1881 the difference of opinion became quite acute when John Oakley, Vicar of Hoxton and a High Churchman, was recommended by Church and Talbot for the Deanery of Carlisle. Arrangements had also been made to instal Knox Little, a Manchester priest of similar outlook, as a Canon of Worcester. While the appointments were pending both candidates made themselves prominent in connexion with public demands for the release of Mr. Green, whose household effects had been ordered to be sold earlier in the year and who still lay in Lancaster jail. During this agitation, Fraser, the Bishop of Manchester, who was a disciple of Church and wanted to see a peaceful settlement, wrote a letter to the Prime Minister on Green's behalf and received a reply in which Mr. Gladstone promised to do what he could. It had to be pointed out, however, that such matters came under the jurisdiction of the Home Secretary. Feeling among High Churchmen caused bitter things to be said, and a wild statement from Knox Little got into the newspapers.³

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The two deans now entered the contest and a succession of letters poured into Number 10. Wellesley wrote strongly disapproving of any preferment either for Oakley or Knox Little. The latter had put himself forward in 'a manner that really compromised the patronage of the Crown'; and, he added, if Mr. Gladstone's appointments were to inspire confidence he would need to withdraw Oakley's name as well. Dean Church at once interceded on the other side, lamenting what had happened but expressing the hope that 'it may be possible to satisfy justice by a strong rebuke to Knox Little without cancelling the appointment'. He had, it appeared, been paying a private visit to the imprisoned Green and his violent expressions when he came away had been 'extracted by the pertinacity of a reporter from a too ready talker'. The culprit had since been to St. Paul's Deanery to explain himself and had written a letter of apology which the Dean sent on. Wellesley thought that quite inadequate. But Gladstone was won over to the merciful view by Church. His letters to the Dean of Windsor, at a time when the arrest of Parnell was the main public news and when he himself felt extremely depressed by political events, are amongst the truest evidence of his personal greatness. A note of almost royal justice sounds through this one, dated from Hawarden Castle, 31 October 1881:

I think you have not been quite accurately informed about Oakley.

When it appeared that Knox Little had committed himself, and might prove to be in a serious scrape, and at the same time that Oakley and he had both been at a meeting, i.e. for obtaining the release of Green, I wrote to the Queen, not withdrawing Oakley, but suspending action in regard to him until I could learn whether he had done anything exceptional.

Now Knox Little has purged himself by regret, so I have not found that Oakley has done anything wrong, for I do not hold it wrong to pray for the release of Green, or to promote a change in the law as to Church causes, a subject we have ourselves referred to a Commission.

He therefore adhered to his recommendation. A further note from Windsor, assuming with relief that he had at any rate 'let Knox Little drop', informed him that the Queen would now assent to Mr. Oakley's being made Dean of Carlisle.

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But they were wrong about the other nominee; the Prime Minister did not drop him, and he kept his Canonry after all.⁴

From that time onwards Church had a finger in most of the ecclesiastical pies while Gladstone was in office. And he did not neglect many legitimate opportunities to further the High Church cause. The Jerusalem Bishopric, 'that inauspicious scheme' whose Anglo-Lutheran implications were such an offence to Newman when it was inaugurated, became vacant in 1881. Thereupon Gladstone, at Church's request, resolved to pursue a policy of 'inactivity' which resulted in Prussia's not making any further nominations. And later on, incidentally, when Archbishop Benson revived the see on purely Anglican lines, the Dean led a protest because he thought the policy regarding it was going to be controlled by anti-Catholic interests. At home he also sought to ensure that the new bishoprics which were being founded did not, like Liverpool, get into Evangelical hands. 'To have a second Bishop Ryle at Southwell', he said, 'would be a bitter disappointment' to many who had subscribed towards endowing a see in the Midlands. But neither there nor at Ripon did Gladstone feel able to nominate Edward Talbot as Church would have desired. The balance of parties had to be observed, and note taken of the political colour of the candidates under review. On the back of a letter in which Church had tendered the name of 'a man of vigour and wisdom' to fill the Deanery of Gloucester, there appears a scribbled note of Gladstone's—'How did he vote at Oxford in 1865 or at other times?'⁵

II. 'CONFIDENTIAL'

The Dean regarded it as a primary concern of the Church to see scholarship properly fostered. When he went to St. Paul's some real distinction had already been secured to the Chapter by Gladstone's appointment of Lightfoot to one of the Canonries. The inability of this Cambridge theologian to share the Tractarian outlook did nothing to lessen Church's admiration of his character and massive learning. Both men, indeed, had simple views about the dedication of their talents unobtrusively to God, and both shared the same horror of being led aside by preferment. In 1879, therefore, when the Bishopric of Durham

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had been offered to Lightfoot and he was hesitating whether to accept it, the Dean felt it very difficult to advise. 'I am worldly enough', he wrote to Benson, 'to feel a great rising of heart at the recognition, with such, and not inadequate, honour of the first scholar of the English Church.' And, he added, 'if he goes to Durham Bishop Butler will have a successor worthy of him, in the combination of innocence, simplicity and pure nobleness of thought and purpose, with intellectual forces which make his fellows wonder and admire'. But, for all that, Church was genuinely distressed at the prospect of Lightfoot's true powers being dissipated amidst the busy duties of an episcopal life. 'I have ventured to plead', he said, 'for the interests, not so much of knowledge, but of study, and for the value in such days as ours of a life professedly devoted to these ends.' Yet afterwards, when Lightfoot had gone to Durham and justified the appointment, Church confessed his objections to have been mistaken.⁶

Happily, the vacant Canonry at St. Paul's was awarded to Stubbs, whose historical scholarship had only received a tardy public recognition. It may have been due to Church as well as to Liddon that Mr. Gladstone moved him to London from the Oriel living of Cholderton in Wiltshire. Certainly the Dean made himself active to get him further advancement. In September 1883 he suggested his name for the Deanery of Durham because of the interest Stubbs would then find in the northern University. 'I should certainly prefer', he added, 'to see him a bishop than the head of a Chapter. But he is so good and true and able a man that he would be useful in one way, if not in another, wherever he went.' Early the following year a move was made to nominate him for the Bishopric of Chester. But the Prime Minister and his adviser had to take their courage in both hands to surmount the hardest of all barriers to preferment in the Church of England. Dark rumours reached Downing Street about the antecedents both of Stubbs and his wife. A painful letter from Church on 13 January shows how he first tried to beat about the bush:

I can conceive no difficulty about Mrs. Stubbs, except that she is not a brilliant person in society. She is a homely person, very good and retiring, without anything very marked about her except her care for her family. She would not be ornamental, or I suppose a

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very attractive wife of a Bishop. But she is so simple and without pretension that she would not discredit him.

Then, in a postscript, conscience forced him to reveal the brutal truth:

I think I ought to have added that the lady is not, I believe, of gentle birth: I think she was a schoolmistress, but always of high character. Her husband has raised himself from the farmer or tradesman class, like not a few of the bench.

I only write this that I may not seem to be keeping anything back which has come within my knowledge.

After an interview in which the Dean assured him that ‘there was nothing whatever against the lady’, Gladstone recommended the appointment and Stubbs became a bishop in March.⁷

Other instances illustrate the characteristic of Church to note the disadvantages against certain men and then urge their advancement on the grounds of sheer worth. Of Freeman he wrote, ‘No doubt he is very unpopular with many people, and not without reason; for he is very unmannerly and inconsiderate’. But, being convinced that he was nevertheless the best man to lead historical studies at Oxford, he persuaded Gladstone to make him Regius Professor of Modern History. When the chair of Pastoral Theology became vacant in 1885 he thus pleaded for Aubrey Moore: ‘He suffers from great physical deformity, which would be in the way perhaps of a conspicuous public office, though it has not prevented him from preaching with effect at St. Paul’s; but such a defect would be of little account in a Professor lecturing to his class, or holding intercourse with his pupils in private.’⁸

Some months before Tait’s death Gladstone began to consider who should be the next Archbishop of Canterbury. The Dean of Windsor did not live to do more than make the first suggestions. He passed on the name of Harold Browne, the venerable Bishop of Winchester, whom Tait designated as his most suitable successor, but went on to express his own preference for Lightfoot: ‘he is one upon whose fitness the Queen and you would cordially agree—her only objection being to his ugliness.’ Gladstone still considered the claims of Browne

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'paramount but for his age'. He also realized that behind Wellesley's communication there loomed Queen Victoria's hope that the Bishop of Durham, if translated to Canterbury, would not exhibit any High Church tendencies. Again it fell to Church to exert a shrewd pull in the opposite direction. Amongst alternatives to Browne he favoured Woodford of Ely but admitted that such an obvious party choice would be perhaps too venturesome. His best course therefore, in the post-Tractarian interest, was to block out Lightfoot by bringing forward a candidate sympathetic to the essentials of English Catholicism but commendable for reasons of statesmanship and personality. After seeing the Prime Minister privately he wrote to him on 9 September 1882:

I still think the Bishop of Winchester, from character and knowledge the best qualified for a place requiring so much judgement and so much sense of the spiritual character of the office. But if a bolder experiment were made with younger men, I think I should like to express more distinctly than I think I did my hesitation about the Bishop of Durham, and my anxiety whether, under the influences which would surround him, the highest interest of the Church would be safe in his keeping. I have had good reason to know his great qualities and his simple goodness. I am sure he would wish to be just. But I should be very uneasy if any grave question of reform or revision of creeds and formularies were decided under his influence. I cannot help fearing that his theology would be, in my judgement, in fault. His friend, a man in some ways like him, the Bishop of Truro, would be a fitter man. He has all Lightfoot's moral qualities, and a great deal of his knowledge, though not all Lightfoot's power of expression. But with all his wide sympathies with outside forms of thought and religion, he has, I think, a deeper and more earnest sense of what the Church is and has been, not merely as a great English institution, but as the historical Church of Christ. Their experience as Bishops is almost equal.⁹

That disposed of Lightfoot. It took the firm opinion of two younger men at Oxford finally to expunge Browne. Having consulted John Wordsworth and Scott Holland, the Dean sent their replies on to Gladstone. That of Scott Holland, written from Christ Church at white heat, filled seven and a half sides of notepaper. In it he inveighed against the very idea of appointing the Bishop of Winchester to Canterbury. Such a

figure, representing a ‘courteous and elderly moderation’, could not hope to give the leadership which the times required. ‘We are sick to death’, he wrote, ‘of official backwardness. Why should Bishops always be *last* in all spiritual movements? Why should they never lead and guide and inspire?’ Wordsworth’s tone was the antithesis of this. Very concisely he put the three qualifications for an archbishop: that he should show promise of sufficient youth and vigour to last at least fifteen years; that he should have the confidence of Church people, lay and clerical; that he should possess statesmanlike ability. Going over the available bishops he could only find Benson fulfilling these conditions satisfactorily. And he put it thus plainly to the Dean ‘because I believe you have sometimes the power of translating ideas into facts’. Nor was he disappointed in the event.¹⁰

While these confidential opinions were being sought it was believed by many people, including some close to the Prime Minister, that the Archbischopric might have gone to the Dean of St. Paul’s. Freeman told people so, and Lord Blachford wrote informing Newman that ‘Church has refused to sit in the seat of Anselm . . . there is no doubt, though he himself was doggedly silent on the subject, that he had the offer’. Against this must be set not only the decisive testimony of Morley’s *Recollections*, but the Dean’s own words in a letter to Asa Gray:

You see the newspapers have been taking liberties with my name. Formal offer there was none, and could not be; for I had already on another occasion told my mind to Gladstone, and said that reasons of health, apart from any other reasons, made it impossible for me to think of anything, except a retirement altogether from public office. But Gladstone was very kind and people round him talked in a way which accounts for the newspaper gossip. (31 December 1882.)¹¹

The truth probably is that Gladstone had told Church on some earlier occasion (and Blachford at the actual time when rumours were rife) whom he would best have liked for the Primacy. But he realized only too well that such a nomination was impossible. Previous correspondence leaves the matter in no doubt. At the beginning of 1882 Moberly’s condition convinced the Prime Minister that a new Bishop of Salisbury would

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be required within a few months. He wrote to Church from Hawarden on 17 January asking him if he would accept that vacancy, and saying that 'it would be impossible to submit any name that would compete with yours'.* If any prospect of Canterbury had not already been precluded, the reply to this proposal would certainly have sufficed:

The Deanery,
St. Paul's,
Jany 19. '82.

My dear Mr. Gladstone,

I am deeply grateful to you for this fresh mark of your confidence.

I am only sorry to hear your announcement. I have been fearing something of the kind for several months past. But only recently I had been told that there had been a great rally and recovery of strength. I have not been able to judge from my own observation since the autumn.

For myself, I think I had better say at once that it does not need much time to give my answer. For several years past I have found winter weather very trying, and naturally it is more trying every year to a weak chest and heart. Here I can do my work at my own time and take precautions: but I cannot stand exposure and the strain of fatigue with impunity. An active and useful Bishop in the country cannot escape a great deal of both in the course of his necessary duty. And as a mere matter of health and strength I should be certain to break down and that very soon.

It is a very great regret to me, because you have been so good as to propose this matter to me, to have to say that I must consider it out of the question. But I think I should do wrong to everyone, if I gave any other answer.

Ever yours most sincerely and gratefully,

R. W. CHURCH.¹²

Salisbury was not the only bishopric that the Dean refused to consider. Indeed, he could almost have had his choice while Gladstone held power. There was a recurrent notion that a see or a deanery in the south-west might be more congenial to him than the post which necessitated his residence in London. It has been noted how, as early as 1872, Gladstone offered him

* Moberly actually stayed on till his death in July 1885, and was succeeded by John Wordsworth. This information about the premature sounding of Church for the 'vacancy' was kindly supplied by Miss Agatha Ramm of Somerville College, Oxford. It forms a vital link in the evidence set out above.

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the Deanery of Winchester. Even in 1883 another considerate opportunity was put in his way. To this he also replied, on 24 September, ‘I do not know how to thank you for your kind suggestion about myself. But till I have to go for good, I do not think I ought to move from this place.’

Despite this, Gladstone did not cease to hope somehow to have him consecrated. At the beginning of 1885 the Bishopric of Lincoln was vacant and Temple’s move from Exeter to London had probably been concluded. A letter from Hawarden, dated 12 January, closed with these words:

You are aware, my dear Dean, what is the appointment I should *most* like to recommend. I do not worry you with solicitations but if from circumstances of climate (as to Exeter) or any other cause your mind has changed I rely on your letting me know.

The Dean’s answer, dictated by common sense without any mock modesty, was dispatched by return of post.

Six months ago your most kind and gracious suggestion would have sent me, however unwillingly, to my conscience and my doctors to consider of my reply. The experience of this last two months has convinced me, that my normal health would no longer bear the exposures and uncertainties of a bishop’s life even in the south.¹³

This last example of Gladstone’s solicitude occurred during the time when Church was making strenuous efforts on behalf of Liddon. People began to ask why such an outstanding preacher and exponent of the devout life had been left so long as a Canon of St. Paul’s. The answer lay in his doctrinal position and his forwardness to champion an advanced form of Anglo-Catholicism in various public disputes. Lord Acton for a long time suspected him of being one of the unstable sort who possess only a slender barrier to keep themselves from going over to Rome. Mary Gladstone rebutted such a view, and her admiration of Liddon was rewarded when Acton, rather surprisingly, told her he also desired to see him elevated. ‘Nothing’, he explained, ‘steadies a ship like a mitre—and as to his soundness, his determination to work in and through the Church, and not on eccentric courses, I satisfied myself with the supreme authority of Dean Church, on my last night in town.’ But Benson, the Archbishop, was not so easily assured. A letter to

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Gladstone, expressing his anxieties about Liddon, was passed to Church who used his utmost powers to allay them.

Liddon [he replied] would certainly bring to the Episcopal bench the element of a very positive and definite belief about the Church and its doctrine. But as long as these were not seriously endangered, I do not myself feel the risk of his disturbing peace and unity. He has made up his mind that his one hope is the Church of England, and however much he may differ from this or that authority in it, he would not lightly do anything that would work the Church a mischief . . . he is by disposition very loyal, and I think that the Archbishop would find him a help and a strength, and not a danger, in a serious crisis.¹⁴

An added difficulty was Liddon's known aversion to any thought about preferment. So, when the Dean had somewhat dispelled official prejudice, Gladstone set him the task of making tentative approaches to his Canon. It is almost comical to imagine Church of all people spending two hours of a January day in 1885 closeted with Liddon and trying to elicit delicately from him whether he could so far overcome Tractarian scruples as to consider a bishopric—or a professorship—or anything. Liddon was shocked at the very suggestion and 'there were some moments of real agony'. What made it worse, as the Dean felt all along, was the psychological clumsiness of having to conduct such a talk in general terms. Before Edward King was appointed to Lincoln many people thought that Liddon should have had it. He would probably have declined, but the Prime Minister did not in fact authorize any direct proposal to be made. In April, when a fresh crop of episcopal vacancies was expected, Church brought Liddon's name before Gladstone once more and expressed the view that if such a bishopric as Salisbury was offered him, he would, after a struggle, feel himself bound to take it. This opinion is shared by perhaps his most intimate friend, whose judgement would certainly weigh greatly with him. Shortly after the conversation, the result of which you know, I returned to the subject, chiefly to express my regret at the distress which he had undergone: and in the course of the talk I understood him to say that if Exeter had definitely come before him, he should have felt that he ought to go there. I think that he would probably feel the same about Salisbury. He has not unsaid anything that he said in the former conversation about his

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general shrinking from the responsibilities of a bishopric. But in a man of Dr. Liddon's nature, so fearful of any appearance of self-seeking, *that was not to be thought of*, even if he *did* think he might have been hasty. (6 April 1885.)¹⁵

All this effort for Liddon proved vain. Subsequent offers of other bishoprics, as well as the Deanery of Salisbury, were not acceptable to him, and he ended his days as a Canon of St. Paul's. But his case throws light on the infinite care which the Dean, having the Prime Minister's full confidence, could take over the worthiness of one individual. The cynicism which has so often been evoked in the history of the Church of England on account of ill-directed patronage, finds here, as throughout the whole Gladstonian régime, a healthy antidote.

The Prime Minister himself kept constantly on the look-out for clergymen of merit, and Church sent him careful lists of inconspicuous priests who were doing good work, often in rough parishes. Knowledge of the facts rather than chance opinion and tittle-tattle was his guiding principle: yet Gladstone was not always able to overlook the world's opinion. Time and again the Dean urged the abilities of a certain Chancellor of a provincial cathedral, but the scales were heavily weighted against the man because his wife 'used to be unable to control herself about drink'. The supreme bar to promotion in Church's eyes however was worldliness. A brother dean, who was on the way to a bishopric because he commended himself to the authorities as a good preacher, had his further prospects clouded by the icy observation: 'I hear that he is a widower, having married three times, twice to heiresses.'¹⁶

III. MAKING THE ESTABLISHMENT ACCEPTABLE

Church always enjoyed easy and frequent access to Gladstone and in the Glynnese vocabulary of the Gladstone domestic circle he had the nickname of 'Chant'. His were amongst the printed sermons which formed the staple diet of a Victorian Sunday for Mary Gladstone, who notes, for instance, in her diary, 'am reading Chant's *Human Life and its Conditions*—quite beautiful'. After attending service at St. Paul's the Prime Minister's family would occasionally adjourn to the Deanery for lunch. Often enough there were invitations for the Churches

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to visit Hawarden, but the Dean usually had an excuse for not going. A typical sidelight is thrown upon the regimen of a Tractarian household by the occasion when he explains that 'as a rule we decline all regular dinner parties in Lent'; if it were a small, private affair they would be glad to come, but not 'if your guests are many and great'. He did of course dine with Gladstone from time to time, but he seems to have preferred a confidential *tête-à-tête* to the sort of family gatherings which Scott Holland revelled in. The surest way to get the Dean to Downing Street was to appeal to an old Oxford habit and ask him round to breakfast at half-past ten. He was there one April morning in 1885 during the dynamite outrages when 'in the very middle of breakfast burst the explosion at the Admiralty and we saw the smoke and the people rushing'. But, for all this, Church only communicated politely with his host as 'my dear Mr. Gladstone'. He appreciated that they were neither equals nor old school-fellows, and he never presumed to regard the Prime Minister as an intimate friend.¹⁷

Yet the obvious disparity of their powers and the places they occupied does not alter the fact that the relationship between the two men was in a special sense a happy one. It enabled them to work as partners in an ecclesiastical policy which, quietly pursued, had a deep and lasting effect. They were thrown together intellectually as fellow-warriors meeting a challenge to the faith which they had both espoused as young men. In them the disasters suffered by Anglicanism in 1845 and 1850 had left a mark upon two persons of no ordinary talent. They remained for the rest of their lives dedicated to the task of making it clear to thoughtful observers that the Established Church was, in spite of what the detractors might say, worthy of respect.

Psychology may account for much of what Gladstone saw in Church. He possessed the very qualities which a politician, who had always wished to be a clergyman, admired most—piety and learning, faithful allegiance to the Church, tact and courtesy, knowledge of the world, literary accomplishment, courage, liberal sentiments on public affairs. (At any rate, those were what he once jotted down as the qualifications to look for in a potential bishop.) The attachment may have been further strengthened by traces in Church of the warrior spirit

which animated his uncle Sir Richard, the hero of the Greek liberation movement. It would not escape the great Parliamentary crusader for justice that the General's nephew showed the virtues both of a guerrilla stalwart and a long-term strategist in the cause of Anglican liberation. Gladstone himself was a bonny fighter on the religious front—but not entirely from impersonal motives. The parting from Manning and Hope-Scott had tinged his original zeal with a certain undying resentment against the Papal system that had snatched them from the religion in which his tender friendship with them had grown up. And behind all the renegades, of course, he never forgot Newman. Church therefore provided a reassuring figure to set against the magic of that prince of converts who was always an enigma to Gladstone. Writing to Mrs. Church after her husband's death he could not resist a comparison which would have horrified the author of *The Oxford Movement*. ‘He speaks so humbly of himself in connexion with Cardinal Newman. Doubtless the genius of Newman has given him a throne which is all his own. But surely the Dean was by much the weightier and the wiser man.’¹⁸

Church, on his part, began by sharing the view of Gladstone which was prevalent with many of his class. For them he represented the sort of politician whom Englishmen generally, if they were Christians at all, and Oxford men in particular, ought to support. The Tractarians, as we have already noted, seized eagerly upon every opportunity to regard the rising politician in the light of an ecclesiastical ally; and he himself accepted that rôle. No one did more than Church to cement this alliance through the columns of the *Guardian*. ‘I observed with gratitude’, said Gladstone, who was a constant reader of that paper, ‘the wonderful skill and great indulgence with which, through a series of years, it handled the tender subject of my sayings and doings’; but it was not till afterwards that he learnt whose pen had been responsible for it. Church belonged, as he realized, to a party in need of a leader. There could not be a second Newman; and in any case someone was required altogether more robust and connected with the world. He recognized Gladstone as a godsend. And never was there a sounder conjunction. It is of interest to remember this if only because the rashnesses and ineptitudes and false moves

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into which the Liberal Prime Minister's impulses led him are so well known. The end of Gladstonianism is one of the saddest chapters in Parliamentary history. Perhaps it is the fulfilment of greatness for the champion of political liberty, having adopted Acton's high code of political morality, to have failed. But as the servant of the Anglican revival Gladstone did not fail. So far as the breach which Newman left could be repaired by the power to make practical adjustments, he was the man for the task.¹⁹

The Church of England, as scrutinized from two important angles during the second half of the nineteenth century, could easily present an unfavourable appearance. The devout and the sceptics were equally critical. On the spiritual side the temper of the times operated in favour of a Communion that claimed to be an embodiment of the supernatural in its doctrine and priesthood and worship. To many eyes, including Gladstone's own, Anglicanism, unless it could exhibit convincing marks of its Catholicity, would never again look respectable. On the other hand, to a growing number of secular thinkers, the one criterion to justify the survival of any institution was moral congruity with the political trend of the age. Philosophers and writers, before and after the passing of the Reform Bill, had done their work too well for a reactionary Establishment to be long tolerated by British public opinion. The genius of Gladstone served somehow to reconcile these two demands with Anglicanism. Even though his convictions as a High Churchman were far from being universally approved, they did command a large measure of acceptance because in his person they were allied to a policy founded upon moral ideals. He stood for a curious blend of orthodox religion and unpatriotic morality which cast a spell upon high-minded Victorians, whether they were believers or rationalists.

While the tide of his prestige ran favourably he seized all the ecclesiastical opportunities. As a result, he did more than any man since Laud to bring into public view the awkward but wholesome reality of what it means for a nation to have to deal seriously with the Church. History can show us few men who have cared so much about, striven so much to comprehend, and done so much to promote the religious and moral well-being of the people committed to them for government. If he loved the

English Church and agonized over her condition it was because he first acknowledged and set himself to serve the Church of Christ as a whole. The importance of this is rarely appreciated by secular historians. Yet it should be apparent that a national calamity, constitutional and spiritual, was not far to seek in the reign of Queen Victoria. The worst consequences could have been expected if a man of Gladstone's strength had been fanatical or lop-sided or merely obtuse in his grasp of religious principles. When it is considered how far as a politician, answerable to other shrewd and critical politicians, he managed to swerve the chariot of state aside from its obvious course in such a matter as foreign policy, who can doubt what a ruinous element he would have introduced, had he taken an anti-clerical line in Church matters? It was fortunate for the Christian allegiance of the nation that Gladstone, however ponderous he could be, never fumbled too long amongst the ecclesiastical pitfalls without seeing the light of reality. Through his patient habit of searching for the truth amongst theological matters which would have bored most Cabinet Ministers, he qualified himself to lay the foundations for saving those two strangely related institutions of English life—the Establishment and the Monarchy.

If Church idolized such a leader it was not without cause. In the attempt which Gladstone was making to redeem ecclesiastical affairs he himself was more than a spectator. As we have seen, he played the part of a principal counsellor in appointing men of the right quality to clerical office. The strategy of patronage had its bearing upon the Ritualist struggle, the outcome of which would not have been the same but for a firm understanding between the Prime Minister and the Dean. Through their influence, it may be said, the angry force of revived sacerdotalism which might have split the Church of England was peaceably absorbed. They were able, as well, to effect a healthy transformation of the official attitude towards both the religious parties bequeathed to the Established Church by the Reformation. Much that the original leaders of the Oxford Movement had desired to see became legally accepted. But while this result was effected under Gladstone's aegis it had only been made possible by adopting the constitutional approach exemplified in the Dean's

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1850 article on Church and State. Indeed, to appreciate Church's later writings it often helps if the reader treats them as footnotes to the Gladstonian polity by one who had been a disciple of Newman.

IV. ANOTHER LOST LEADER

But Church was destined not to go all the way with either of these leaders. In the end he could not stomach the streak of obsession which ran with genius. He failed, however, to recognize as dangerous the taste of it he got from Gladstone in 1875. Early that year the self-deposed leader of the Liberal party withdrew for a season into private life and launched a violent attack in pamphlet form upon the Papacy because of the Vatican Decrees. Church was consulted upon technical points and showed himself not averse to the business of hunting down references to 'Infallibility' in writers earlier than Bellarmine. He enjoyed this kind of polemical tussle at times but, whereas with him the scholarly habit kept control and always enabled him to break off gracefully, with Gladstone anti-Romanism was in danger of being a mania. Lord Blachford had the sense to warn his old chief that controversy with the Ultramontanes would only increase his difficulties over the Irish Question if he again became Prime Minister. Five years later when Gladstone had returned to office the same friend expressed his misgivings in another frank letter (20 December 1880), saying that for several months 'the Ministry seem to have been suffering from an unaccountable paralysis while the Government of Ireland has been slipping from their hands'.²⁰

Church in his study of *Spenser* (published in 1879) discussed the poet's connexion with Ireland in a way which reflected upon nineteenth-century issues. Spenser, we are told, had gone as an Elizabethan courtier to make his fortune 'in a country which was to England much what Algeria was to France some thirty years ago'. He took with him 'the common opinion of Protestant Englishmen, that they had at least in England the pure and undoubted religion of the Bible: and in Ireland, he found himself face to face with the very superstition in its lowest forms which he had so hated in England'. And the fact emerges that, in the great poem which Spenser's sojourn

amongst a strange people enabled him to produce, ‘there does not appear a trace of consideration for what the Irish might feel or desire or resent . . .’. The poet does not fail to enlarge upon ‘that power of malignity and detraction which he has figured in the Blatant Beast of the *Faery Queen*: but of English cruelty, of English injustice, of English rapacity, of English prejudice, he is profoundly unconscious’. Here, as elsewhere, the Dean’s moral sense ranged him with Gladstone as a hater of man’s inhumanity to man. But to set against the temptation to take ancient brutalities out of the context of their times, he quotes instances from other places at the same period to show that massacre and callousness were not confined to Ireland. In the religious wars of France, if not in the Low Countries and amongst the Spaniards as well, ‘even the “execution” of Smerwick was continually outdone’. The inference for Victorian readers was that, while England owed an enormous debt of penitence for the crimes perpetrated in Ireland, it did not serve the cause of justice for agitators to resurrect ancient wrongs and expect Parliament to view them as being on a par with the contemporary atrocities reported from Bulgaria. Moral principles could only be the basis of statesmanship if the occasions of acting upon them were differentiated. Church was perhaps not as quick as Blachford to foreclose upon the axiom that politics are concerned with the field of what is possible.* But in the last decade of his life he was forced to look more and more anxiously into Gladstone’s mind for some interplay between practical sagacity and the idealism which he so much admired.²¹

He had evidence of the restiveness of Liberal intellectuals during the time of Gladstone’s second Midlothian campaign just before the election of 1880. Writing to Blachford on 30 March, he said:

I was at a crush at Tennyson’s last night. It seemed to me that the room was throbbing with Anti-Gladstonianism. Tennyson began by asking me whether I was a great admirer of Diz—Well, he said, he was not either—he was always a Liberal; but really the way in which — was going on, also — was quite intolerable; and then he spoke of the Austrian business very bitterly.

* ‘What a muff European concert is unless one or more powers are prepared and allowed to act constable!’ (Blachford to Church, 17 October 1880.)

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Then I came across Spedding—(what a haranguer—a good one—he is). He went on the same way, only more temperately and evenly than the poet, without jerks. He said that his sympathies had been all his life with the Liberal party (he still read his *Daily News*) but that as things are, he could not now wish them to come to power.²²

There was apparently a growing despair of Gladstone who ‘ought to have held a position quite unique in England by this time’. Things were grave when a man like Spedding had even begun to minimize the ill-deeds of Disraeli whose death a few months later did nothing to improve the Liberal position. Church wrote to Blachford, 26 April 1881, expressing his surprise at the ‘outburst of allegiance to Lord Beaconsfield’ displayed by Londoners at the time of the funeral:

Today everything shows as much mourning as it can, public buildings and the police ship in the river with flags half mast, and the blinds of the clubs all down—and the *St. James's Gazette* exultant at the amount of enthusiastic feeling ‘which even his warmest admirers did not expect’.... And there is poor Gladstone with his terrible Irish Land Bill, and colleagues who cannot speak for him, and apparently making blunders himself. All the world expected him to say a few words about Dizzy last night, which was a natural occasion, and he need not have said much. Now, he puts off a fortnight, when he must make a studied panegyric, and, meanwhile, gets the credit of an intentional slight yesterday. I am afraid hard times are in store for him.²³

The following spring the Dean enjoyed a holiday in Italy. ‘But even here’, he wrote, from amidst the marvels of Rome, ‘Ireland haunts me day and night.’ After almost forcing the Land Bill through Parliament, Gladstone was exhausting his very supporters’ patience by seeming to truckle to Parnell and the terrorists. ‘I have tried hard to believe’, Church told Talbot, ‘that he has been right. But it seems to me he is blind to Irish insolence and Irish keen sense of their winning game.’ When news came from Dublin of the Cavendish murder in the Phoenix Park, Church wrote to his brother from Florence, on 17 May 1882, a letter which exactly expressed the general admiration of the way in which the Chief Secretary’s widow behaved under her dreadful bereavement:

No Roman or Florentine lady ever said a more heroic thing, than what Lady Frederick Cavendish said to Gladstone the first time she

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saw him after the news had come: ‘Uncle William, you did right to send him to Ireland.’ We have heard a good deal about her and her people from Talbot and Liddon. I wish I could think that her prayer is likely to come to pass—that his death may help to bring peace to Ireland.²⁴

It is curious to reflect that, whereas when the Dean meditated resigning his place during the Ritualist controversy Gladstone wisely held him back, Church had no corresponding power to restrain the headstrong policy of the aged Prime Minister at a time when some influence other than that of the visionary Acton would have saved his reputation. Church learned much from the moral and religious outlook of so noble a statesman, but it is one of the ironies of their relationship that, of the two, the clergyman had a shrewder grasp than his patron had of the politics of the age. With so competent a student of affairs at hand, it does not seem to have occurred to Gladstone to consult him upon other than ecclesiastical issues. As things were, Church could only play the part of an impotent observer. Early in 1885, when the troubles in Ireland were for a time overshadowed by the unfortunate results of British policy in Egypt and news of General Gordon’s death had arrived from Khartoum, the Dean wrote an illuminating letter to Canon MacColl, an old campaigner with Gladstone in the Liberal cause. In it he went to the root of the Prime Minister’s failure to take a strong line in the Sudan, and his apparent helplessness against the cynical tactics of the French and German governments. It simply was, said Church, the climax of his having consistently ‘subordinated his policy to an absolutely hopeless condition’. His sad conclusion had an ominous farewell look about it:

I shall ever think that Mr. Gladstone is distinguished from all the political actors of his time by the lofty magnanimity with which he has sought to subject even national fame and material interest to the rules of justice and honesty—especially for that great attempt which bullies and ribalds sneer at now, the attempt at ‘European Concert’, to bring the combined force of Christian and civilized Europe, acknowledging the duties of high civilization, to bear on the affairs of civilized states. His beginning at Dulcigno was true statesmanship and showed how things ought to be done. But he had to deal, East and West, with a very different order of people. . .

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It is the most dreary part of the outlook that a policy of honesty and real friendship, with no selfish ideas of aggrandisement in view, was tried to the end of the nineteenth century by the most wonderful and most honest of English statesmen, and to all appearance, for the present at least, has failed.

The Gordon incident is tragic enough; but it is only an incident, though it now naturally appeals to feelings. But it seems to me that the core of the matter is deeper. It is that Gladstone wanted the eye to see the real character of Continental diplomacy early enough.²⁵

There remained the pathetic business of Gladstone's third term of office and the defection of those who could not accept his Home Rule Bill. For Church the spell was already broken. He had been a reluctant Liberal at the first, drawn by Gladstone's greatness out of a natural preference for the Tory tradition.* Another fighting alliance had died. This time it did not entail any sort of parting scene like that at the Oxford Observatory in 1846. There is a characteristic detachment about the way in which, on 7 April 1886, he informs Talbot almost incidentally of the breach; so perhaps it is permissible to impose italics:

I wish I saw some chance of a rush to Bournemouth. But I do not. I am in the thick of work which is not very easy, trying to say what I can about the later development of the Movement. . . . It is not easy work, and I want to get at least a first draft of it off my hands before Easter. . . .

It is all very dreary and unhappy just now. The G.O.M. persisting in his heroic enterprise in the teeth of everything and everybody, sure that he is right, and apparently sure that he knows best the conditions of success. I cannot conceive how it will all end. But, whether he is right or not, there is something to me unspeakably pathetic in his solitude. . . .

Perhaps he is right, and the *via salutis* may open out of the thick disaster. But I can't see it; and *for the second time in my life I have to try as well as I can to unite unabated admiration with the impossibility of moral or intellectual agreement.*

Well, I daresay you have heard that we had three days of the Cardinal. He was so bright, so kind, so affectionate; very old and

* *Vanity Fair* on 30 January 1886 printed a caricature of the Dean of St. Paul's; and in the accompanying notice declared somewhat sourly that Church (before his promotion from Whatley to a post worth £2,000 a year) 'had always been a blind and ardent worshipper of Mr. Gladstone'.

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soon tired, but also soon refreshed with a pause of rest, and making fun of his old age. ‘You know I could not do an addition sum.’ Anyhow, he was quite alive to all that is passing round him, though cautious and reticent as he should be. But the old smile and twinkle of the eye, and bright, meaning *εἰρωνεία*, are all still there, and all seemed to belong to the old days.²⁶

So he reports the death of his Gladstonian allegiance; and at the same time tenderly relegates the master of his political ideals to a melancholy place beside the old master of his religious faith. It is the deposing of a lost leader from the place of idols ‘for the second time in my life’. Those words are the key to an understanding of Dean Church. Hero-worship was perhaps a necessity of his nature because he lost his father at a critical moment of his boyhood. Certainly, for so independent a mind, he showed a strange desire to do his own work under the shelter of other men’s greatness. His adult life was spent in two distinct periods of ardent discipleship. Quickness to follow in the mental track of the two most powerful leaders known to England in the nineteenth century was, however, always matched by a critical instinct for knowing when to draw out. Consequently, when it came to an absolute version either of Catholicism or Liberalism, he refused to join genius in going over the precipice.

V. RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

As we saw from his letter to Talbot, Church now turned again to the cause which had enlisted the devotion of his early manhood. During the remaining years of his life he had no lack of personal interests, but one task stood supreme. In 1884 he started to compile material for his memoir, *The Oxford Movement*. His respect and affection for Mr. Gladstone never ceased; but in his latest letters, when the Dean applied to him, it was to obtain reminiscences of that other ‘experiment’ of which Newman had been the tragic driving force. A strong desire to leave for posterity some authentic witness to the Tractarian ethos compelled him to undertake a first-hand critical record. His thoughts were liable to steal wistfully back to those great days. Indeed, the sequel in the lives of some of the men concerned made sad material for reflection. In 1880, for instance,

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we find him lamenting the end of one who had meant much in the ceremonial revival at Margaret Chapel, where Mr. Gladstone used to worship when in London:

Poor Oakeley. I have always thought of him as one of the converts of '44 or '45 who had sacrificed much that the natural man cares for. He was a man whose quality and whose craving was refinement, not strength, or exactness, or ascertained truth, or originality of any kind, but the grace and beauty of finish. He was just the man to pass a happy and useful life, writing elegant and interesting lectures and sermons, and enjoying music and art and good talk without luxury or selfishness, as a distinguished Anglican clergyman. The Romans made nothing of him, but sent him up to Islington to live poorly in a poor house with two Irish colleagues, with just a print or two and a few books remaining of the Oxford wreck, which was the overthrow of his old idea of life. And he was to the last, as far as I saw him, interested in nothing so much as in gossip of the old days; and he was always kindly and patient and gentle, not without touches of amusement when talking of people who did not think with him. It was like a genuine bit of the old Balliol Common-room, set in the frame of this dingy Islington parlour.²⁷

Such thoughts were soon to be sharpened by other evidence of what time had done. In July 1881 Church, whose love of the sea was a strong characteristic, took a holiday cruise in the Irish Channel on board the yacht *Sibyl*. She had a roughish passage from Holyhead, but he enjoyed it; and, as they reached the shelter of Portland Roads under a half-gale, he sat in the saloon to write 'with all pendulous things gently swaying and making one sleepy'. In the midst of this laziness came the startling news of Stanley's death. His brother dean was an exact contemporary with Church, and they had been ordained together. The blow served to remind him that he belonged to an era of effort and influence which were beginning to vanish.²⁸

Hutton, of the *Spectator*, thought Church should have been transferred from St. Paul's to the Abbey to brighten up the ecclesiastical dullness of the West End. But, although someone was foolish enough to suggest this to Gladstone, no such move was contemplated. Church had enough to do where he was with what time and strength remained. He had lived to become, amidst all sorts of spiritual cross-currents, a reconciling figure. Without seeking popularity he found himself trusted

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by various schools of thought both in the religious and the secular world. Within his own Communion he wielded a subtle and peculiar influence. His very name became a rallying point for a number of promising spirits amongst Anglicans of the younger generation.²⁹

Chief of these perhaps was Edward Talbot whom the Dean knew as Warden of Keble from 1870 to 1888. Talbot's veneration for the older man began during his student days at Christ Church. 'He always remembered the exact spot in Oriel Lane where a friend pointed out to him "Church of Oriel".' Fifty years later he published in the *Treasury* the reasons which made him adopt as his master one who carried over from the Oxford Movement, as the essential permanent gains, a 'patient loyalty to fact, and keen sense of reality'. As a contributor to *Lux Mundi* in 1889, Talbot figured with Charles Gore in the Liberal Catholic attempt to commend the orthodox faith to thoughtful people by stating it in terms compatible with the critical scholarship of that time. Another member of the same group, Francis Paget, became the Dean's son-in-law as well as his disciple.* Yet another—the most flamboyant of Gore's companions in the Christian Socialist crusade—was Scott Holland who, as a Canon of St. Paul's, saw the Dean at close range and came to revere him with no ordinary loyalty. It was not that Church courted these latest pathfinders of doctrine, or even shared their views in full. He jibbed at *Lux Mundi* when it actually appeared, as a man of his age could hardly help doing. But, unlike Liddon, he approved what Gore was working for and encouraged him to publish. It was part of his nature to respect fresh thought. Young men, if they had a case to state, could always be sure of sympathy and attention from Church. And in return they made him their embodiment of the Anglican ideal.

He had won out of an older past, which was to us [said Scott Holland] an heroic age, the spirit of the Christian soldier warring for the right. But, on the other hand, he was the one who most

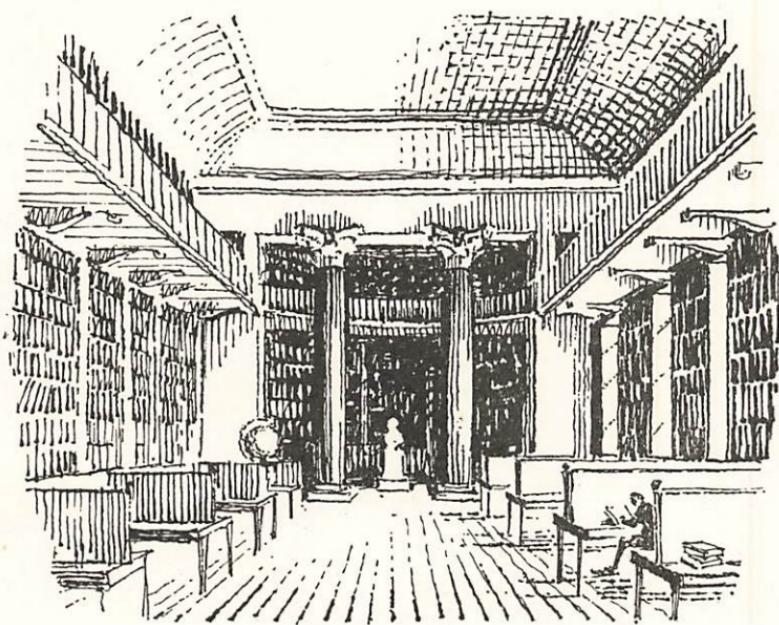
* When Gore succeeded Paget as Bishop of Oxford he had at Cuddesdon a butler whose archaeological tendencies once triumphed by digging up in the garden a piece of sculpture which he believed to be an ancient representation of some Roman god. Upon examination, alas, it turned out to be a bust of Dean Church which Paget had buried because of its ugliness! (G. L. Prestige: *The Life of Charles Gore* (1935), 325.)

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intimately followed on with the new movements and the fresh temper. He . . . had been in the very heart of all that was most touching and most famous. Yet he was never imprisoned within the tragic attraction of that epoch in which he had played so high a part. . . . It is difficult to exaggerate his influence in reconciliation and in control at a juncture when old bonds were stretched near to breaking. He stood between the old and the young, procuring the entire confidence of each, with an authority over both which was unique.

No doubt it was contact with his personality which counted most in giving the Dean this prestige. But equally important were the principles and convictions which people of his day learnt from him, and which later generations can appreciate from a study of his writings. Something has already been said in a previous chapter about Church's early essays and the development of his mind as a young man. It remains to make a survey of what he finally left available for those who read him.³⁰

PART FIVE



Oriel College Library

CHAPTER NINE

Church's Mind and Writings



I. VIA CRITICA

THE writings of Dean Church are, from first to last, a plea for justice. That is their purpose. They may quite properly fail to magnify the author himself, either as a display of brilliance, or of the power to conceive and finish some great work. It is true that there often occurs the hint of what might have been achieved as a large-scale performance. It is also true that gleams of something richer than ordinary prose underlie certain passages in Church's books, but he never seized the opportunity of developing any theme into the proportions of a masterpiece. His total output, if all the articles he wrote could be identified and brought together, is not perhaps so small as has been supposed; but it consists too much in the form of *opuscula* to make a fine impression as literature. Indeed, Church scarcely aspired to be an author outside the compass of weekly journalism. He lent himself to the life-long task of being a kind of mental sieve through which the thought and affairs of the day could be presented to the reading public in a digestible state.

His articles were for those who wanted to make sense of life rather than simply to be amused by it. That meant a first-class chance of being a moralizer and an insufferable prig. But Church is not to be quite so easily written off. He is in fact a critic to reckon with both inside and outside the Victorian period. He can be relied upon to recognize the right things and appreciate them to the full without deviating one iota from a due sense of proportion. Enemies are safe in his hands, and friends not too safe. He has a way of moving sure-footed amongst those pitfalls of taste which disclose themselves only at the unspoken levels of perception. And—as an evidence of

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this—he is never morally shrill. Both priggishness and prophecy are kept severely out of Church's work because he is intent upon the business in hand, which is not to justify himself and his ideas but to do justice.

Yet can a good critic keep prophecy out? There is an advantage sometimes in attempting to. The nineteenth century had had a surfeit of prophesying on the grand scale. It was always being told that some solution must be found by the modern mind to the threatening enigmas of life. Two streams of prophecy had emerged. It is a familiar idea to discern a major cleavage in attitude between the iconoclasts and the conservatives: Rousseau versus Burke, and Coleridge versus Carlyle. Amongst such great ones Dean Church has no place, for he was not the philosopher or genius at all. But he ought to have a compartment of his own in the lower flights of criticism as such. It needs to be observed perhaps that, apart from the well-known studies of *Spenser* and *Bacon*, he has left quite a corpus of critical writing. But it is collected under titles which hardly indicate its aggregate importance.* He belongs, as a moulder of public opinion, somewhere between Newman and Matthew Arnold simply because he persisted in offering a modest alternative to them both. He shared with them a sub-Coleridgian position by refusing to dismiss the life of institutions as a curse. All three believed in the traditional pieties bequeathed to the world by Christendom. They resisted the revolutionary demand of the century to break down the old structure of reverence and erect in its place something individualistic, cerebral, and new. Yet, despite this conservatism, Newman and Arnold could not avoid the necessity to improve upon the plain Christianity of their upbringing. Coleridge, amidst all his abstruse philosophizing, had always conceived it to provide a sufficient basis for a full moral and intellectual life. But now, according to Newman, the Christian faith needed safeguarding within the Roman system of Catholicism. And, according to Matthew Arnold, Christian morality was all that could be saved from the old religion, although he strongly

* e.g. *Occasional Papers* (2 vols.); *Miscellaneous Essays; Pascal and Other Sermons; Cathedral and University Sermons; The Gifts of Civilization; Human Life and Its Conditions*. Not all the contents of these volumes reach permanent worth, but the dross is outweighed by the gold.

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believed that men of education and goodwill ought also—for cultural reasons—to preserve the Established Church. It is interesting to note that Dean Church had real affinities with both these great teachers of the age. He was ranged with Newman as a man of religion in the orthodox sense, and with Arnold as an avowed inheritor of the civilized mind. But whereas they, in different ways, present dogma and criticism as alternatives and erect Catholicism and Culture into the prime enabling systems which men must first espouse in order to be saved, he stayed where he was. As a mere Anglican he trusted the Gospel, unbuttressed still, to reveal its power whenever men would try to obey it. If a text were needed as a key to Church's outlook it would not be far to seek. Sufficient unto the situation is the grace that goes with it: fight for the Faith in the community where Providence has already planted both it and you. In an age of too many prophets that also may be prophecy, but at least it has the recommendation of being unpretentious and Biblical in spirit.

Comparison between his mind and Newman's is a recurrent theme for us because it provides what is perhaps the most significant aspect of Church's life. And, when both worked in prose, it is permissible to compare him also with Matthew Arnold. In the critical field Church, like Arnold, made his assessments against a European rather than a purely English background. His knowledge of the Continent and its literature was not superficial. Readers could be sure to find him as competent to review Thierry or unravel the career of Lamen-nais as he was to discuss Epictetus or throw new light upon Guicciardini. The very choice of such subjects bears a resemblance to the cosmopolitan display of topics in Arnold's *Essays in Criticism*. Church would have been amused to think of any Englishman aspiring to be cosmopolitan, but he certainly was no provincial. Nor did he shun the new discoveries of the day. Whereas churchmen were expected to panic before the scientific prospect and the threats of secularists, his concern was simply that Christians, like any other rational men, should take stock of the known facts. His basic conviction was that justice needs to be done to whatever human achievements have shown reality and life. That brings him very close to the famous advocate of 'sweetness and light' both in temper as well as taste. Matthew

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Arnold held up before his public cultural samples of the best that had been thought and known. Church turned his appreciative powers to more modest use. He tried to display what had been attained by the representatives of religion when called upon to maintain the living faith amidst a welter of affairs. His studies of Anselm, Dante, Pascal, and Bishop Andrewes—to say nothing of such less congenial figures as St. Bernard and Ignatius Loyola—illustrate the natural bent which he possessed for seeing big religious issues in terms of intellectual biography. The struggle, whether between truth and authority, or between faith and reason, interested Church most when it overflowed from theology into the literature and politics of a specific period of history. He worked entirely on the occasional method and eschewed both a large canvas and a philosophical apparatus. He had the gift for compressing into a single article or sermon the essence of what it means, not merely for religion but for every civilized person, when some great mind has wrestled with an epoch. The suggestion is not that orthodoxy could only be virile in the past, but that it still is and always will be so when men are big enough and brave enough to strive for its adjustment to the new situation. Church usually implies this without saying so. He succeeds in being altogether less didactic than Matthew Arnold, and speaks in the tone of voice of a man who is addressing his equals. His confidence in future and present as well as past history, together with the not having to proclaim a novel gospel of his own, delivers him from any tendency to harangue. Instead of appealing for the formation of a new clerisy, he leaves it to the intelligence and conscience of those whom he is addressing to recognize their inheritance and responsibility. Arnold may urge that man's only chance is to cultivate sensibility until he becomes wise enough to save himself from barbarism. But Church sees matters in a light altogether less flattering and less desperate than that.¹

He does not suppose that things will be easy. But if intelligent people will give their attention to the Gospel they will find, from what it implies, that Providence goes on inviting the whole race to do justice to itself. A large-scale destiny awaits mankind on the basis of an opportunity once offered—and needing neither to be superseded, nor repeated nor withdrawn—because it is permanently sufficient for its purpose. The

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divine 'foolishness', as St. Paul ironically terms it, must not be expected to abdicate before the advance of man's 'wisdom'. The moderns therefore only complicate things to their hurt by running away from the main fact of history. No doubt it needs looking at in the light of its own interpretation. But if justice is done to it, other facts—some of them very intractable—will fall sufficiently into place. Church's work consists in the application of this principle to human achievements and prospects within a range of religion, history, and literature which he was qualified to handle. He finds before him a scene of both richness and tragedy; but he sees it, as Dante did, in a glorious context of final meaning and hope.

II. THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

Something of the strength and sanity of Dr. Johnson as a critic belongs also to Dean Church, despite obvious differences in other ways. This is because their personal standards of judgement were not eccentric. They were never alien to the tradition under which they had to work. In handling a culture with Christian assumptions and origins they were not constantly having to swallow down reservations about its ultimate validity. Believers at heart, they looked out upon their world from an inner watch-tower of faith. The voice of Johnson can almost be heard saying 'Amen' as Church makes this declaration:

when we name religion, we mean something beside which all experience here is soon at fault, all faculties of thought at last find their term, all creations of imagination are pale and tame. . . . Christianity starts with the assumption of the incomprehensible greatness of what is out of sight, and presupposes a world of mystery; and so, in reality, view it as we will, does human nature.²

That for the author of these words the wings of the spirit had not in his youth been clipped by rationalism was largely because of Newman. The ability of men to know God might well have been called in question by Church's student mind. The witness of Psalmists, New Testament writers, and the Saints, could have seemed no more than the dead relics of history. But at Oxford he came into contact with one in whom the 'awfulness of things unseen' was a present reality. For any

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man who had once belonged to the Tractarian fellowship there always remained, he says, ‘something *sui generis* in the profoundly serious, profoundly reverent tone, about everything that touched religion’.³

The knowledge of God in this sense has been aptly likened to a secret flame at the core of personality. Though actually lit by the human contact of one disciple with another, it is essentially a sacred gift, supernatural in origin. The thing therefore is elemental and cannot be analysed or argued about. Nor can it be generated by moral or intellectual endeavour, as when someone adopts the Christian ethic, or, having reasoned out the credibility of the Gospels, decides to accept the Church. Unless he realizes, with a certain awestruck fear, that it is the all-holy God who has adopted him, the flame of true faith has not been lit. Insistence upon this mysteriousness at the centre of the religious life is a *sine qua non* with Dean Church. From it as a starting-point he felt free to venture out intellectually and rationally in every direction. It was something which reason and intellect had not provided him with and could not take from him. But where this element was missing, no amount of external activity on behalf of the Christian cause could, he believed, make good the inner darkness of the soul. It alarmed him therefore to see, in a man so noble as Stanley, an apparent ‘incapacity for the spiritual and unearthly side of religion’ which, to Evangelicals as well as to High Churchmen, always brought an ‘aspiration after divine affections, and longings after God’. Similarly there was a tell-tale deficiency when some writer, himself not a Christian, tried to present a sympathetic biography of a religious figure like St. Bernard. Church’s admiration of that paragon of monks was not unbounded; but he recognized in him, beneath all else, the authentic features of a man of God. ‘That sight of the unseen, that burning and inextinguishable love of an object beyond the veil, the new life inspired by this never-failing faith and this ever-growing love—these were the real roots and springs of all that Bernard thought or wished or did.’⁴

The energy of the devout life, so conceived, all radiates from the Person whom Christians know as Lord. ‘The serious love of the unseen Christ’ has proved itself down the centuries, according to Church, to be ‘the highest of all affections, raised

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to the power of a master principle of life.' He was well aware that it might lead to unhealthy and mawkish aberrations, such as those in which Fénelon became involved at the French court because of Madame Guyon. But the true strain of Christian mysticism is not thereby invalidated. In his own spiritual reading Church reserved a special place for Thomas à Kempis.* But he knew also the merit of such a very different manual as the *Sacra Privata* of Bishop Wilson who, in his eighteenth-century English dress, 'belongs to the days of grave piety and subdued enthusiasm, and distrust of all that is showy, or venturesome, or romantic in religion'. The essential thing is that, in whatever way, the soul should be shaped by and sustained upon the mind of Christ.⁵

And that is where the Oxford Movement, as C. C. J. Webb has noted, broke new ground theologically. Whereas Evangelical doctrine, basing itself upon texts which it could gather from the Epistles of St. Paul, 'had dwelt upon the work of Christ, and laid comparatively little stress on His example, or the picture left us of His Personality and Life', the Tractarians loved to read again the Gospel narrative. There, says Church, they could feed their faith on the teachings of a living Master, and in the sacred records 'almost see and hear His going in and out among men'. This fresh emphasis upon the Incarnation led to something more than stories of Jesus in stained glass or the revival of Christmas carols. Side by side with a mysterious sense of Christ's presence in their worship, and a desire to make the parish church and its services worthy of the Lord who is ascended and glorified, the pioneers of the Oxford revival set a standard of plain sermons. No longer were congregations to be given dissertations upon the 'sufficiency of Scripture' or the 'distinction between justification and sanctification'. In place of such abstractions the Tractarian preacher, certainly in the early days, dealt with the concrete question of what the ordinary disciple must do in this world here and now. The doctrine, implied but not always stated, was that all the members of the congregation were living units in the Catholic

* In a letter to the *Guardian*, 25 January 1946, the Rev. A. S. Bryant wrote—'I have the book he [Church] gave to his daughter as he was leaving the Deanery for the last time, dated October 2nd., 1890—*De Imitatione Christi*, in the original with his own annotations.'

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Church which is the Body of Christ, and that they received grace through the sacraments in order that He should live the good life in them. But, to fit themselves for this indwelling, men had need to search their hearts and know their motives. Holiness had to be serious first, then practical. Everything that is thought or said or done has its place, for better, for worse, within the pattern of Christ's most terrible régime of love.⁶

That pastoral message is the final truth for man on this planet. Consequently it should not begin and end as a Sunday morning exhortation in Whatley village church. There was much that the preacher had to say on the applications of this message to a wider circle of hearers. For in Dean Church the critic and the clergyman are always one. Unlike that of the merely literary Sterne, the doctrine which he preaches is the assumption on which he writes. All comes from a recognition of the Incarnation as the central fact in human history. By it, and only by it, have our activities, achievements, and aspirations any validity.

What is the best art and the best fiction, what is the poetry which has most permanent hold on the human mind, what is half of all history and biography, but attempts in various ways to satisfy this craving hunger of the soul for goodness and excellence which, it is sure, exists, but which experience refuses to show us—aspirations which insist on believing what they can never find? . . . But He has come, the 'desire of all nations', and that longing after the perfect exemplar of human character has found a reality in which it can be at rest. . . . Alike in what He was, and in what He was not and refused to be on earth, in His unapproachable heights, in His unutterable lowness, in His distance from us and His fellowship with us, in His wrath and in His gentleness and meekness, in the unclouded simplicity of His truth, and in the tenderness and freedom of His compassion and love, in His power and in His weakness the human heart has owned its Lord and its Pattern, the perfect reality which it longed for without knowing all it sought, the Living Law which embraced the whole range of its duties and its needs, Him whom all nations, amid all the differences of race and time, desired and could delight in.⁷

In depicting thus the moral attractiveness of the Incarnate Lord, Church does not forget the central place of His Passion. For sinners it needs to be a constant recollection that 'He,

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from whom judgement is come over the world, its history, its generations, is He to whom the world once appointed, as His just portion, the Cross Yet Calvary remains for ever the point where, if 'universal fears about sin were more than justified . . . universal longings for pardon were more than answered'. In truth, then, the total declaration of the life and death and rising of this Lord is one of all-embracing triumph. And because of the triumph, when life on earth seems hardest, 'let it be enough for us that we are men'. For our joy and our glory henceforth are simply to learn at every opportunity 'what it is to belong to the race into which the Son of God was born'.⁸

III. CIVILIZATION

We are taught by Freud that the *super-ego*, once it gets on top, is a relentless bully. There seems to be no limit to the demands of a scrupulous conscience. The voice of God in the Bible makes absolute demands. People who associate religion with fanaticism may well dread to hear the Gospel for fear that to accept it will mean an end to most interests and joys in this life. Christian preachers in all ages have certainly belaboured 'the world' unmercifully. The question arises, on the Freudian assumption, whether religion can have an *ego* as well as a *super-ego*, whether it dare try to establish a reasonable attitude to earthly concerns. Would it not inevitably lose its grip upon men's hearts by tending to slackness? Has not the last word on this matter been uttered by Kierkegaard in his frightening denunciations against the entangling of Christianity with secular things? Let it be said at once that Dean Church, in his volume *The Gifts of Civilization* and elsewhere, approaches the whole subject very differently from the Danish prophet. Perhaps, indeed, it is the Englishman who speaks more closely to the spirit of prophecy; the other to apocalyptic.

The Coming of Christ, His Passion, His Rising again, His Ascendant Power, His Giving of the Spirit—these, says Church, are 'awful mysteries which have made all things new to man'. Under the Christian dispensation 'we are dealt with henceforth not as children but as men; trusted with the amazing secret of our real destiny'. In the light of eternal life a vast

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prospect is revealed. ‘We are still bound to time, but the significance of this change is that it opens to us something beyond time. We are still subjects of nature, and citizens of this visible world which Christ’s Redemption has done so much to interpret and exalt. But that Redemption . . . imparts to us what is above nature, and makes us sharers in the realities and powers of the invisible world.’ This present life of ours upon the earth is ‘only the foreground of an endless perspective’.⁹

Church never tires of emphasizing the truth that, for Christians, ‘this world is absolutely as nothing in comparison with the world to come’. But, precisely because of the envelope of eternity within which it is enclosed, our temporal life takes on a new aspect of importance. It is henceforth a practice-ground for moral development where souls receive their first and all-important exercise in grace. And this brings in social and corporate considerations. The Gospel of love has taken morality into a direction unknown even to so noble a pagan as Epictetus. For him the interests of society at large are out of sight. The world with its politics means nothing. ‘He has no future; posterity seems never to cross his thoughts. . . . He has no high notion of human nature in the mass.’ But the disciples of Christ, though they rightly regard life as a pilgrimage and rate the mundane order as something secondary, have in fact created a social increment here on earth. Thus:

Christianity, among its many glories, is the parent of popular education. . . . By disclosing what man was made for and might become, and what God had done for him, it furnished to each generation a new and overwhelming motive for caring for their children, for caring for posterity. They are indeed worth caring for, they are worth all our forethought and our efforts for their improvement, who have such an endless life before them, for whom Christ died.¹⁰

This overflow of heavenly vision into social channels does not reach its limit with the training of the young. The heirs of grace can never rest content to be cultivators of their own souls and the souls of their immediate kindred. They accept it as the great Biblical principle that ‘those whom God’s providence has called by His sovereign predestination and choice into the fellowship and family of His Church have not only to take care of themselves, but to serve as the ministers of His great dis-

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pensation to recover and reclaim the whole human race'. Nor does missionary zeal operate as a matter of hard propaganda to make people accept a formula and bow down before a cult. If it first commands awe it also evokes tenderness when men of prayer reflect upon how 'the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us'. As the Rector of Whatley told his village congregation, we are wrong if we picture Christ in His earthly life speaking or caring about nothing but what 'was plainly and visibly a matter of salvation'. Men's ordinary happinesses and workaday concerns were not too trivial for Him who attended a peasant wedding as a guest. Once sin is forgiven and sanctifying love has free course in human affairs, the things of earth do not shrivel up under the divine light of eternity.¹¹

But because the Lord was born in a stable the principle of the Incarnation is not confined to what happens to be local and familiar. 'It gave every man a new interest in all men.' No barrier, whether racial, political, or intellectual, can separate humanity from the claims of Christ's love. The Gospel pursues us into our institutions. As a plain fact of history it is found that Christianity and civilization have gone together and reacted upon each other. It can be shown that the task of conveying the Gospel to the generality of mankind was facilitated by the existence of the Roman Empire. Again, it is obvious that Christian values have exerted a leavening influence upon the organization of society, especially in Europe. But the whole idea of 'Christian values' is an offence to certain devout minds, and a disturbing question is posed. Knowing how the elaboration of life and the development of amenities can leave men with an outlook from which the spirit of Christ is woefully absent, must we not say that civilization is the enemy of true religion? Some Christians have no hesitation in saying that it is. But Dean Church answers differently. He felt himself bound to recognize that there are in this world some strong elements of human goodness which have a non-Christian, and indeed a non-religious, origin. Civilizations more ancient than the Gospel bear witness to the fact that 'God has yet other ways, secret in working yet undeniable in effect, of bringing out the graces which tend to make men like Himself'. This does not lessen the need for us to appreciate a clear distinction between the function of civilization and the purpose of Christianity.

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But, because Providence is indivisible, it is a fair conclusion that 'they have essentially one origin, and come both of them from Him who has made man for this world, as well as intended him for another'.¹²

To vindicate that view Dean Church made a careful examination of the apparent contrast between religious life as the New Testament depicts it and the institutional religion of modern times. It is a commonplace of popular argument to point to the simplicity of the Twelve Apostles and then ask how we come to have, in the name of Christ, a religious set-up everywhere so much involved with secular affairs. In the early chapters of *The Gifts of Civilization* this challenge is fairly and thoroughly faced. Looking at war, law, and trade, Church first asks how Christian society can reconcile them with the Sermon on the Mount. Again, Christianity has been not only an eminently social religion, but a liberal religion, deliberately seeking to naturalize and adopt such pursuits as art, literature, and science. 'We educate by the classics, and are not afraid of Shakespeare. We may say, and say truly, that where there is society, these things must be; but Christian society began in the life of the New Testament and they are not there.' The commands of Christ to His disciples were not figurative when He bade them sell what they had, take no thought for the morrow, lay not up treasure, resist not evil. Has the history of Christian society been then the history of a great evasion, and are we insincere for allying our religion with civilized life?¹³

To answer this in full would have meant bringing before modern Puritans a treatise comparable to that with which Hooker met the Scripture-mongers of the sixteenth century. But Church had no fierce controversy on hand and we must be content with a lightly-argued thesis. His contention is that, if we may have any guide to the purposes of God in the tendencies and conditions amid which we live, we must believe that social order with its various laws and pursuits is by divine ordering. Everyone, whether religious or not, is involved. And so,

unless there is nothing more to be done than to wait for its ending—what we call society, the rule of law, the employments of business, the cultivation of our infinite resources, the embodiment of public force and power, the increase of wealth, the continued improvement

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of social arrangements—all this is indispensable. There is no standing still in these matters; the only other alternative is drifting back into confusion and violence. . . . It is God's plan that in spite of the vanity and shortness of life . . . and in spite of that disproportionateness to eternity which the Gospel has disclosed to us, men should yet have to show what they are, and what is in them to do; should develop and cultivate their wonderful powers; should become something proportionate to their endowments for this life, and push to their full limit the employments which come to their hand. The Church by its practice, its greatest writers by their philosophy and theories, have sanctioned this view of the use and divine appointment of the present life. This natural order of things was once interrupted. It was when Christ came to begin society anew. But as soon as the first great shock was over, which accompanied a Gospel of which the centre was the Cross and Resurrection, it became plain that the mission of the Church was not to remain outside of and apart from society, but to absorb it and act on it in endless ways; that Christianity was calculated and intended for even a wider purpose than had been prominently disclosed at first; that in more refined and extended ways than anyone then imagined, it was to make natural human society, obstinate and refractory as it was, own its sway, and yield to an influence, working slowly but working inexhaustibly, over long tracts of time, not for generations but centuries.¹⁴

It follows from this that, as he says, 'Christendom has grown out of the upper room', not by accident or perversion, but because of God's merciful concern for humanity. It also follows that some of the absolute maxims of the Sermon on the Mount were only directly applicable in the days when Christ was, by violence, founding His Kingdom. Christians in other ages must obey His words and follow His example in a way proportionate to the new conditions. Yet the essential Gospel remains. The Cross and the law of God's love in terms of self-sacrifice will never be outmoded by the advances of civilization. The character of other-worldliness, proper to every disciple of Christ according to the measure of his grace and opportunity, will always be the true flower of the Gospel. 'Our treasure is not here . . . no one can be really a Christian who has not something of a heavenly mind.'¹⁵

Church set himself a congenial task when he delivered a group of lectures to illustrate the influence of Christianity upon

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various types of national character—Greek, Roman, Teutonic. In such an elusive field his perceptiveness and caution enabled him to extend the evidence for saying that the impact of the Gospel upon a particular civilization does produce new and distinctive human excellences to the glory of God. But he has taken note also that Christianity and civilization, mutually provocative as they may be for good, have in some phases of history existed, either without any conscious reference to each other, or even in fierce opposition. The possibility, under crisis, of a return to that relationship has become more apparent to our century. Theological insight has taught a later generation to see in the New Testament situation continuing elements which perhaps the Victorian age could not be expected to see. But Church as a Christian humanist stands independent of all that. He was not serving merely his own generation when he turned to periods in which he could clearly trace the glories reflected in the temporal order, through human faculties, from the eternal.

IV. THE MEASURE OF HUMANISM

The author of *Pilgrim's Progress* and the author of *Bishop Blougram's Apology* were both Christians. But there is a world of difference between their conceptions of the challenge which religion has to meet from life. Browning saw faith inextricably involved with humanism. And Church for that reason found his attention being roused, even in old age, by whatever Browning wrote. He thought no trouble too much to give to a poet who handled the moral destiny of man as a live issue within the context of a world which is not simply Vanity Fair. There was a reason, he believed, why Puritanism in literature is never quite satisfactory. 'Bunyan's strong but narrow ideals of religion, true as they are up to a certain point, fall short of the length and breadth and depth of what Christianity has made of man, and may yet make of him.'¹⁶

These words reveal Church's point of view as a literary critic. His canons of judgement were generous because of the generosity of his theology. He applied them only in a limited field where they could be most effective. A few short studies separately published, and a number of articles about representa-

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tive men in various centuries, were enough for his purpose. They provided him with scope to explore the epic theme of humanism. The mention of Browning, his younger contemporary, is evidence that he was not only interested in 'period pieces'. But some periods lent themselves particularly for treatment by an avowed Christian humanist. After his *St. Anselm* and *Dante* it is the group of Renaissance studies—of Montaigne, Spenser, and Bacon in particular—which best illustrate this side of the Dean's contribution.* The figures dealt with, it will be noticed, were but harbingers of Shakespeare, Newton, and Goethe. They are associated less with the noon-day splendours of humanist achievement than with an awaking prospect of it. And that suited very well with Church's talent for analysing some situation in which he could appreciate the seeds of a promised greatness.

From the religious point of view humanism ought to mean first of all, according to Church, a lesson in appreciation. Christians can hardly fulfil their vocation unless they know their world. One of the merits of Bishop Andrewes was that he had broken bounds. Leaving scholasticism behind, he rose to a level of faith, says his admirer, at which 'you become aware of your relation to a vaster and more diversified world, a world full of mystery, yet touching you on every side'. This was not just Catholicism, but Catholicism in Anglican dress, matched in spirit with the intellectual climate of the generation to which Andrewes belonged. Indeed, a theologian of the Renaissance found himself in a Europe precociously talented; certainly in a Europe growing up. Christianity was no longer dealing, as in the Middle Ages, with children but with newly-sophisticated men. What size in religious minds, it might be asked, would it have taken to preach effectively before a Leonardo da Vinci? Church felt that kind of challenge.¹⁷

He is a good introduction to a study of the period because of his consciousness that the age of the Reformation in England was also, before it finished, the age of Bacon and Shakespeare. He took in the literary and would-be scientific sweep along with the religious. That they really went together might be

* Church's article, 'The Essays of Montaigne', first appeared in the *Oxford Essays of 1857* and was reprinted in his *Miscellaneous Essays* in 1888. He produced *Spenser* in 1879 and *Bacon* in 1884 for the 'English Men of Letters' series.

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inferred from the whole tenor of Hooker's comprehensive mind. And some things said by Church in his introduction to the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* have a very wide relevance. The following passage indicates, so to speak, what time of day it was in the story of human development.

Hooker was one of those rare controversialists who are more intent on showing *why* their opponents are wrong than even the fact that they are so, and who are not afraid of the challenge to build as well as to destroy, or of the task of replacing what they have refuted by a positive construction, which invites the test of a wider application to facts. To what he considered the fundamental mistake of the Puritans, an exaggerated and false theory of the purpose and function of Scripture as the exclusive guide of human conduct, he opposed his own more comprehensive theory of a rule derived not from one alone, but from all the sources of light and truth with which man finds himself encompassed. It has been said that Hooker's argument is one which depends much on authority: but this is a partial way of stating his method. He argues from authority, where he thinks the argument in place; but his whole theory rests on the principle that the paramount and supreme guide, both of the world and of human action, is reason. Mr. Hallam finds Hooker's 'fundamental position' in the doctrine of the 'mutability of positive law'. This is hardly accurate; for Hooker certainly held some positive laws to be immutable to man. If we are to fix on any 'fundamental position', as the key of his method of arguing, I should rather look for it in his doctrine, so pertinaciously urged and always implied, of the *concurrence and co-operation*, each in its due place, of all possible means of knowledge for man's direction. Take which you please, reason or Scripture, your own reason or that of others, private judgement or general consent, nature or grace, one *presupposes*—it is a favourite word with him—the existence of others, and it is not intended to do its work of illumination and guidance without them: and the man who elects to go by one alone, will assuredly find in the end that he has gone wrong. His point is that the philosophical mistake, that is, the mistake as to fact and experience, made by his opponents is at least as great as their religious mistake; and that their whole system and case rest on a radical misconception of the moral nature of man, his means of knowledge, his appointed manner of action, the kind of evidence on which his belief is based.¹⁸

Here was a new and fundamental conception thrown into the theological arena by humanism. Putting it in terms of a problem for those who believed in the Incarnation, a stage had

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been reached when authority in religion meant something which men, corporately and as individuals, must recognize for themselves. So Church understood Hooker.

Both *Spenser* and *Bacon* throw further light upon the complex nature of a race which Christianity has so signally helped to put on its feet, and to which henceforth it must appeal in subtler ways than before. The Spenserian background is that of the newly-arrived humanist, looking upon himself as a civilized person. The cult of magnanimity in literature and refinement in manners was evidence of a society growing up and conscious of its elbow room. It could hardly have been better epitomized than in a passage from *Spenser* which is reminiscent of what Newman, in his *Idea of a University*, wrote about the gentlemanly character. Church may well have picked up the thought from his old master for he often re-echoes him in some way. But he was a pupil capable of building his own extensions to some purpose upon what he borrowed. And this dissertation upon the English gentleman is not put in as embroidery. The thing is accurately focused as an historical phenomenon to give point to what is being said about humanistic development.

It was as a whole a new character in the world. It had not really existed in the days of feudalism and chivalry, though features of it had appeared, and its descent was traced from those times: but they were too wild and coarse, too turbulent and disorderly, for a character which, however ready for adventure and battle, looked to peace, refinement, order, and law as the true conditions of its perfection. In the days of Elizabeth it was beginning to fill a large place in English life. It was formed amid the increasing cultivation of the nation, the increasing varieties of public service, the awakening responsibilities to duty and calls to self-command. Still making much of the prerogatives of noble blood and family honours, it was something independent of nobility and beyond it. A nobleman might have in him the making of a gentleman: but it was the man himself of whom the gentleman was made. Great birth, even great capacity, were not enough; there must be added a new delicacy of conscience, a new appreciation of what is beautiful and worthy of honour, a new measure of the strength and nobleness of self-control, of devotion to unselfish interests. This idea of manhood, based not only on force and courage, but on truth, on refinement, on public spirit, on soberness and modesty, on consideration for others, was

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taking possession of the younger generation of Elizabeth's middle years. Of course the idea was very imperfectly apprehended, still more imperfectly realized. But it was something which on the same scale had not been yet, and which was to be the seed of something greater. It was to grow into those strong, simple, noble characters, pure in aim and devoted to duty, the Falklands, the Hampdens, who amid so much evil formed such a remarkable feature in the Civil Wars, both on the Royalist and the Parliamentary sides. It was to grow into that high type of cultivated English nature, in the present and the last century, common both to its monarchical and its democratic embodiments, than which, with all its faults and defects, our western civilization has produced few things more admirable.¹⁹

In *Bacon*, especially in the masterly chapter on his philosophy, we are presented with the Renaissance humanist as he looks out upon the natural order. Church did not allow himself to be deterred by Asa Gray's verdict that Bacon was no true scientist but a mere sciolist. Tracing the whole story of human endeavour to reach some systematic body of knowledge, he glances at the main schools that have engaged in the search. The Greeks had a genius for speculation; the Romans undertook some encyclopaedic labours; the sceptical Arabs looked widely about them; the schoolmen of the Middle Ages sharpened themselves upon all that was abstruse; the Italian pioneers of research made daring flights. Yet, amongst them all, there can be found no mind except Aristotle's to compare with Bacon's in the universality of his conception. Let it be admitted that he made woeful mistakes as to method. It is accepted, moreover, that the very conditions of knowing have since his day precluded any one man from aspiring as he did. 'Bacon, like Aristotle, belonged to an age of adventure, which went to sea little knowing whither it went, and ill furnished with knowledge and instruments. He entered with a vast and vague scheme of discovery on these unknown seas and new worlds which to us are familiar and daily traversed in every direction.'²⁰ Yet, though he lacked what later ages have gained in the way of precision and power, the dreamer who planned the *Instauratio* has (according to Church) a glory which cannot be taken from him.

The writing of *Bacon* gave little pleasure to the Dean because of the strain of moral turpitude which he detected in the man.

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But the book is a triumph of the author's sense of justice towards his subject, and his sense of proportion where the main foundations of culture are concerned. He recognized that, with all his grievous faults, Bacon was never false to his own great vision of science as it rose before him—unified, magisterial, humane. Similarly in *Spenser* he is not blind to imperfections. Church saw him as a poet working at a stage in literary development when the medieval tutelage had not quite been cast off. Imaginative writers still felt themselves called upon to proclaim a moral purpose in coming before the public. That can now be recognized as a blemish. But at the Spenserian phase we have no right to demand the Shakespearean freedom which leaves poetry to make its own impression without apology. 'Even genius must wait for the gifts of time. It cannot forerun the limitations of its day, nor anticipate the conquests and common possessions of the future. Things are impossible to the first great masters of art which are easy to their second-rate successors.'²¹

We have been referring to books in which Dean Church does no preaching and draws no religious inferences. But, taking these literary studies into the context of his total outlook, we may note three things. In the first place, Church was one of that minority of Christians who accepted the humanistic development with an intelligent appreciation of all that it implied. He regarded it as a true part of a spiritual inheritance which, no less than its physical manifestation, was divinely intended to carry a rich increment for man. Then, secondly, he realized that, in view of all this, the Gospel had to be presented by theologians to a being not only critical and scientific by nature but also conscious of his own new dignity and power. Yet, thirdly, he had reason to fear that the basic problem of salvation, though infinitely complicated, remained unaltered. Pride and madness, far from being cast out by knowledge, might feed upon it to man's destruction. Philosophy in Bacon had been no remedy against the poison of politics; and the just verdict upon his career was that, after 'seeing deep into man's worth, his capacities, his greatness, his weakness, his sins, he was not true to what he knew'. Nor can it be forgotten that Spenser, though clear of such condemnation, was in truth

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a courtier-humanist. He appears in the pages of Dean Church as a literary figure who is also, inescapably, a political animal. His estate in Ireland presupposed a long tale of English oppression. It was against a barbarous Tudor background that his imagination, no less than that of Lord Chancellor Bacon, dared to be magnificent.²²

Church's most deliberate portrait of Renaissance man is limned for us in his article on the Essays of Montaigne. There he brings out the superb accomplishments of a writer whose genius he obviously admires, but for whom admiration cannot be his last word.

In Montaigne we see that new intellectual liberty of his day, not knowing how to use itself, or take care of itself; puzzled by what it saw, and by what it had to keep to; boldly dwelling on discrepancies, but too lazy and self-willed to try to penetrate them and reconcile them. He felt the obligation, cast on men by the times in which he lived, of learning *to think*, instead of repeating other men's words; but he did not feel the greatness of the purpose for which that obligation had been cast on them. He shows himself wonderfully little impeded by the customary prepossessions of his contemporaries, able with ease to break through what we looking back seem to see clearly to have been the tangles and trammels of mere habit in his day—the habit which made good men think torture a necessary and natural engine of law, and wise men take for granted that a cold distance and a savage drill was the only rational way of breeding up their children. But besides the keenness and good sense shown, Montaigne's thinking came to little. He broke the ground which others after him sowed with many kinds of seed. He was a kind of imperfect Socrates, the cross-examiner of his generation—bold, inquisitive, and shrewd, taking nothing on trust, and hating pretence—homely, unconventional, untechnical,—with his idea right but too careless, too selfish, and it must be added, not pure enough, not thorough enough, to give it effect; below Socrates in elevation and noble purpose, fifteen hundred years after an event which ought to have made him wiser and more serious than Socrates.²³

The conclusion to which such humanism points is plain. In the words of the Psalmist: such as will not believe shall not be able to exalt themselves. 'Man, as experience shows him,' says Church, 'groans and travails under a great moral failure.' Montaigne was a prophetic sample of yet later products of an unregenerate stock. Emancipated from the claims of reverence,

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only to be enslaved by emptiness; bearing upon him the marks both of divinity and dirt, there now exists a being potentially dangerous to the world because already so dangerous to himself. To the eye of the Christian critic, who is also a humanist, this cultured but godless creature appears brittle yet strangely attractive at bottom. For he sees him strutting about as one destined to be broken before he is re-made according to the fullness and toughness of his true stature.²⁴

V. THE JUDGEMENT OF HISTORY

If Church does not always fit smoothly into the category of literary critic, neither can he be called an historian in the accepted sense. He was indeed a life-long student of history and his writing generally carries the rich flavour of historical scholarship. But the amateur tradition to which he belonged by training was being superseded. The gentlemanly era of the Gibbons, Macaulays, and Carlyles had done great things in its own style; but before Bryce and Froude laid down their pens the days were numbered when material could be assumed to be ready at hand for an historian prepared to bring with him the qualifications of sound labour, a large grasp and a good prose style. With Ranke had come the scientific exploration and analysis of documentary sources, and amidst such a technical revolution Church had the diffidence to know his limitations. Close friendship with men like Freeman and Stubbs as well as his contacts with Acton taught him to discern something of that trend which left the future in England, so far as foundation studies were concerned, with Maitland. Perhaps it was one of the Dean's sharper disappointments to know that his dreams as a young man could never be fulfilled. His one textbook, *The Beginning of the Middle Ages*, written in 1877, is a respectable as well as a readable production; and it can be noted from the Preface with what conscientiousness its author had learnt to put himself to school under the new German authorities. Church knew that amongst serious historians he could only expect a very modest place.

But he has a real place partly because he was a careful scholar, and partly because of his genius for sound verdicts. Few writers are more intelligently sympathetic to the outlook

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of past ages. The charitableness of Creighton towards apparently disreputable Popes finds an earlier counterpart in Church's unwillingness ever to condemn bygone institutions and personages outright. He observed that, though it comes as a shock to us to find so saintly a man as Bishop Andrewes giving his sanction to the burning of a heretic, 'it was not shocking, but necessary and right, to the whole religious world of the day'. Again, in a review of Lecky's *History of European Morals* he corrects the censoriousness of that author on the subject of extravagance amongst the early ascetics. 'You must take men, even Egyptian monks, not only for what they are, but for what they can be; and it is a perpetual mistake in historical judgements to insist on requiring from men what it was impossible, in the nature of things, that at the time they should be.' His sense of justice gives Church the boldness even to put Gibbon in his place for the temerity with which, in the *Decline and Fall*, he has dismissed the Greeks of the Lower Empire from any serious consideration.

It is not too much to say that the common opinion of educated Englishmen about the history and character of everything derived from Byzantium or connected with it is based on this History, and, in fact, as a definite opinion dates from its appearance. He has brought out with incomparable force all that was vicious, all that was weak, in Eastern Christendom. He has read us the evil lesson of caring in their history to see nothing else; of feeling too much pleasure in the picture of a religion discredited, of a great ideal utterly and meanly baffled, to desire to disturb it by the inconvenient severity of accuracy and justice. But the authority of Gibbon is not final. There is, after all, another side to the story. In telling it, his immense and usually exact knowledge gave him every advantage in supporting what I must call the prejudiced conclusions of a singularly cold heart; while his wit, his shrewdness, and his pitiless sarcasm gave an edge to his learning, and a force which learning has not always had in shaping the opinions of the unlearned.²⁵

There sounds in those words the resentment of a religious man against infidelity for presuming, in the name of scholarship, to besmirch the faith with a lie. Yet, it should be noted that the most scathing of Church's moral judgements was perhaps that which he himself passed upon the failure of Christians when the Eastern Empire met its hour of final calamity. He has

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moreover enshrined this condemnation in a piece of historical writing which, by its style and sustained quality of handling a big theme, is a tribute to what he learned from Gibbon. ‘The Early Ottomans’* concludes with the scene at Constantinople after the Moslem army of Mahomet II had appeared before the walls of the city.

To the last hour of the Greek Empire, it was Christians who betrayed the cause of Christendom. While the flower of that mighty and enthusiastic host, which their determined and remorseless master had gathered round the walls, had been won from Christendom, ‘while the greatest part of Mahomet’s pashas and Janissaries were the offspring of Christian parents’, Christians, who had their faith and their liberty to save, hung back, and refused to fight in company. The Genoese traders of Galata were bargaining for themselves with Mahomet, in the very height and crisis of the siege; and looked on without molesting him, when he dragged his barks under their fortifications from the Bosphorus to the harbour. It was a Christian engineer who gave Mahomet his artillery—but he was, perhaps, only a dull craftsman working for his bread—it was a Christian ambassador in the camp of Mahomet, the ambassador of the great Hunyady, who instructed the awkward artillermen how to breach the rampart.

It is some relief in this oppressive spectacle of blindness, of baseness, and of decay, to rest our eyes on the imperfect virtue and desolate end of the last Constantine. A brave man in a herd of cowards, yet even he did not deserve to save Constantinople; for he had sold his conscience and outraged his people by purchasing the niggard aid of the Latins at the price of the humiliation of the Eastern Church. But he, at least, had taken his resolution to endure even to death, and that gave him nobleness. He calmly bore the insults of the fanatic and dastardly populace in the streets, who remembered only that he had suffered a Roman legate to profane by the Western ritual the altar of St. Sophia, and hooted him, while he was toiling against hope to save them. Then, when all was done—when, in spite of all, the Turks were in the harbour, and the walls had crumbled beneath their cannon, when the great breach was now ready at the gate of St. Romanus, and the last sun had set on an empire of eleven hundred years—he prepared to die, as one who bore the name and the crown of him who had been the first of Christian kings. All Christmas time, all Lent, all Eastertide, there

* It first appeared in *Oxford Essays* in 1857, and was reprinted in Church’s *Miscellaneous Essays*, 1888.

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had been emptiness and solitude under the mighty dome of Justinian; since the Latin prelate had been there, the crowds of Greek worshippers had forsaken it, as delivered over to demons. Its midnight gloom was the fit refuge for a deserted emperor, when his soul came to seek for the last mournful moments of peace. All round the city, from the heights of Galata, along the bridge across the harbour, and in front of the city walls to the shore of the Propontis, a dazzling blaze of illumination lighted up the Turkish lines; in the camp, and on the sea, festive lamps were hung out on tent, and mast, and yard-arm, and the shouts of exulting multitudes, proclaiming the greatness of the false prophet, and the victory of the morrow, rose fierce and wild on all sides through the night, while the last rite that Christians were to perform in St. Sophia was celebrated, the midnight communion of its doomed emperor. Humbled and meek in his fortitude, he earnestly craved, as his last request, the forgiveness of those from whom he was parting. Dawn found him in the breach, breasting the destroying storm. He bore up while the Genoese captain, Giustiniani, who had fought with him through the siege, remained by his side. He might, perhaps, have borne up successfully, but Giustiniani was at length wounded; whether from the agony of his wound, or as others thought, from a despair which he could control no longer, the gallantest of the Italian captains left the breach; and when the stranger forsook him, Constantine sunk beneath his fate—29th May 1453. He perished, unrecognized, by an unknown hand. A few hours afterwards, Mahomet rode through the gate, in which the heaps of corpses showed where the last fierce struggle for the perishing empire had taken place, and knew not that the Caesar's was among them.²⁶

VI. ANGLICANISM: A NEW PHENOMENON

From the disasters which sinful churchmen had brought upon Christianity in the East we must now turn with Church to consider a singular aspect of the great religious tragedy of the West. Here there was at least one fascinating outcome. For England the Reformation, with all its mistakes and miseries, did bring a new and glorious opportunity. Somehow, miraculously, out of the Elizabethan Settlement the phenomenon called Anglicanism was born. The old Church, wounded and half-dead from its political encounter, was picked up by a merciful Providence; and, as a result, it not only revived but underwent a revolution in outlook. Thenceforth, like a Jew

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with pro-Samaritan loyalties, it had to face a life in which it might expect both to suffer and to be misunderstood.

Englishmen themselves, while tolerating the Church of England, have been slow to embrace Anglicanism for what it is. Their failure to understand its nature is largely bound up with ignorance about its real origins. In their attitude to the Reformation in this country the public have been, according to Dean Church, persistently misled by historians. The Whig tradition regarded it as a constitutional necessity either to denigrate or obscure the Catholic elements in the national story; and 'Catholic' for that purpose included the main line of Anglican spirituality from Hooker, Herbert, and Andrewes, through Taylor, Cosin, Laud, and the Non-juring Ken. The Tractarians were heirs of the Carolines in the maintenance of this line, but the fate of the entire cause was almost sealed by the despair of Newman. Revulsion of feeling, called forth by the events of 1845, left ordinary people ready to feed more avidly upon the anti-Catholic prejudice without any care to discriminate amongst the facts of the case. Consequently James Anthony Froude, with his splendid style and his genius for the patriotic and the picturesque, became the accepted interpreter of the English Reformation to his fellow-countrymen. Just as the authority of Gibbon had damaged the general attitude to Byzantium, so the influence of Froude made it difficult for anyone to offer a balanced presentation of Anglicanism as it went through its formative stages.

Church felt this particularly. He did not quarrel with the mixed nature of the ecclesiastical settlement in England. He admitted that the Evangelicals as a party could hardly be blamed for insisting that the true apostles of the Established Church, as they conceived it, were Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, and Jewel. But it seemed to him intolerable that the other side of the case should persistently go by default because of the inadequacy of an historian like Froude. But he lived to see the tide turning as new scholars began to present a truer picture of the Reformation period. In his last article for the *Guardian*, shortly before his death, Church had the satisfaction to note that the romantic glamour cast by Froude upon English bluntness and bluff in the sixteenth century had somewhat faded. For, he wrote:

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though there are still some who see nothing absurd in the assumption that the opinions and decisions of the Tudor Reformers are the final law and settlement of a Church which had, after terrible trials and almost ruin, to be reorganized afresh in the following century, the time has now gone by when it seemed irreverent to criticize the words and deeds of the Reformers, and when it seemed an act of piety to put a good meaning on the most questionable of their words and deeds. We feel at liberty to judge the Reformation as we might judge the French Revolution, or the system of the Papacy, or the proceedings of the Long Parliament. We do not feel ourselves bound to take it *en bloc*, as pure in its origin and unmixed in its blessings. We can venture to examine the motives, the capacity, the learning, the honesty of its chief representatives. We have been freed from a superstitious deference to it; and any school or party will be ill counselled which attempts a revival of that feeling for it.²⁷

Since Froude's time a steady output of new histories and biographies has placed the old cocksure Protestantism very much in the shade. We have been witnesses of an impressive rehabilitation of the Roman Catholic side in the great dispute. Church would undoubtedly have rejoiced to see justice done to the story of fidelity and heroism so often displayed by recusants in their day of trial. But it could hardly have brought him any nearer to supposing that one side could ever be proved right and the other wrong on the main principles at stake. In the balance-sheet of what was noble and what was execrable, neither Reformers nor Papists come off with any decisive credit. Church, like Scott in his novels, had too much insight into human character under stress not to sympathize with the moral dilemma in which the best of the rival participants found themselves. In the Continental struggle, for instance, he felt that Milman when confronted by a figure such as Savonarola had failed to appreciate 'the reality and depth of those eternal problems of religious thought and feeling which have made theology'. He considered that an English history of the Reformation had yet to be written, and that it would tax the capacities of a very good historian to do it. Amongst small contributions in the interim Church himself undertook to make a study of Queen Elizabeth for John Morley's 'English Statesmen' series; but only the first chapter was finished.²⁸

He has, however, left future generations a most penetrating

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commentary upon the rise of Anglicanism as he saw it. The essence of his outlook on this subject is embodied in a lecture on Bishop Andrewes which he delivered at King's College in 1877.* It is, indeed, a classic utterance. We are made to see the emergence of what is both a grand conception and yet more than any man's private conception, as it was first articulated by Hooker, next taken up and developed as a living reality by Andrewes, and thence bequeathed to permanent history through a succession of other devoted spirits. Church, speaking for all those who have shared so rich an inheritance, asks very pertinently whether this thing was in fact a departure from the purpose of the Reformation. His answer is important enough to demand quotation at some length. First, we are reminded that the process is of one piece to the historian, and was still going on in the time of Charles II 'as truly as it was in the days of Edward VI and Elizabeth'. Within that total period we find ourselves, says Church, dealing with an enterprise which, theologically speaking, was most bravely audacious.

Its object was to revolutionize the practical system of the English Church without breaking with history and the past; to give the Crown and the State vast and new powers of correction and control, without trenching on the inherited prerogatives of the spirituality; and to do this without the advantage of a clear, solid, well-tested, consistent theory, or else, as in Luther's case, of a strong exaggerated cry and watchword. . . . The English Reformation ventured on its tremendous undertaking—the attempt to make the Church theologically, politically, socially different, while keeping it historically and essentially the same—with what seems the most slender outfit of appliances. Principles it had; but they were very partially explored, applied, followed out to consequences, harmonized, limited. It sprung from an idea, a great and solid one, even though dimly comprehended, but not from a theory or a system, such as that unfolded in Calvin's *Institutes*. Its public and avowed purpose—I do not say that of all its promoters—but its public purpose was, taking the actual historical Church of Augustine and Ethelbert, of Becket and Wolsey, of Warham and Pole, the existing historical representative and descendant of that supernatural Society which is traceable through all the ages to Apostolic days, to assert its rights, to release it from usurpation, to purge away the evils which this usurpation had created and fostered; and accepting the Bible as the

* Printed in *Pascal and Other Sermons*, 52-96.

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Primitive Church had accepted it, and trying to test everything by Scripture and history, to meet the immediate necessities of a crisis which called not only for abolition, but for reconstruction and replacement. What was done bore the marks of a clear and definite purpose; but it also bore the unmistakable marks of haste and pressure, as well as violence. Laws—all but the most indispensable ones—canons, synods, tribunals, the adjustment of the differing elements of its constitution, were adjourned to a more convenient season, which, in fact, has never arrived. It began with arrangements avowedly provisional. On the great dogmatic controversies of the moment it defined cautiously, its critics said, imperfectly: it hardly had made up its own mind. For the systematic confessions of the Continent, it provided a makeshift in the Thirty-nine Articles, put to a use for which they were not originally designed. But it did four things: 1. It maintained the Episcopate and the Ordinal; 2. It put the English Bible into the hands of the people; 3. It gave them the English Book of Common Prayer; and 4. To bind all together with the necessary bond of authority, it substituted boldly and confidently, in place of the rejected authority of the Pope, the authority, equally undefined, of the Crown, presumed to be loyally Christian and profoundly religious, and always acting in concert with the Church and its representatives. It has been called a *via media*, a compromise. It is more true to fact to say that what was in the thought of those who guided it under Henry VIII and Elizabeth was an attempt, genuine though rude and rough and not always successful, to look all round the subject; to embrace in one compass as many advantages as they could—perhaps incompatible and inconsistent ones—without much regard to producible and harmonizing theories: antiquity and novelty, control and freedom, ecclesiastical and civil authority, the staid order of a Church as old as the nation and the vigour of a modern revolution of the age of the Renaissance, a very strong public government with an equally strong private fervour and enthusiasm; to stimulate conscience and the sense of individual responsibility, and yet to keep them from bursting all bounds; to overthrow a vast ancient power, strong in its very abuses and intrenched behind the prejudices as well as the great deeds of centuries, and yet to save the sensitive, delicate instincts of loyalty, reverence, and obedience; to make room in the same system of teaching for the venerable language of ancient Fathers and also for the new learning of famous modern authorities.

The task was a difficult one, as it was unique among the various projects opposed to it, or likened to it, going on at the same time in Western Christendom.²⁹

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History, then, showed the basis of fact and opportunity upon which Anglicanism had arisen and developed. But in the nineteenth century might not the whole thing be of merely academic interest unless Anglicans who knew the historical facts also seized the opportunities and overset the difficulties of their own day? Church observed that Hooker, when he presented the case originally for Anglicanism, had to 'cut across the grain of public prejudice'. Such a thesis would always be against the grain while forces both to the right and to the left could offer something more vehement to argue and more simple to obey. Would the weight of popular alternatives prove finally too strong?

VII. TO AWAIT VINDICATION

History as Church treated it was never an academic subject. For him the real issues of the past were all somehow alive in the present. Everything he wrote upon historical themes is found therefore to be deeply imbued with personal convictions. And he reaches his finest style when the matter before him is history in the making, as he himself saw it. *The Oxford Movement*, published in 1891 shortly after the Dean's death, is evidence of that.

It is the worthy record of a corporate religious awakening which ranks with the most celebrated in modern Church history. But the thing is more than a record. It is the revelation of a terrific task. Any who entertain visions of a revival of the Church of England are brought face to face with the sort of world in which religious idealists have to work. Despite all his moderation there is a strain of smouldering anger in Dean Church when he remembers the ignorance and obstinacy of those old men who made it their business to wreck the Oxford Movement:

They were good and respectable men, living comfortably in a certain state and ease. Their lives were mostly simple compared with the standard of the outer world, though Fellows of Colleges thought them luxurious. But they were blind and dull as tea-table gossips as to what was the meaning of the movement. . . . It perplexed and annoyed them; they had not imagination nor moral elevation to take in what it aimed at; they were content with the routine which they

had inherited; and, so that men read for honours and took first classes, it did not seem to them strange or a profanation that the whole mixed crowd of undergraduates should be expected to go on a certain Sunday in term, willing or unwilling, fit or unfit, to the Sacrament, and be fined if they did not appear. Doubtless we are all of us too prone to be content with the customary, and to be prejudiced against the novel, nor is this condition of things without advantage. But we must bear our condemnation if we stick to the customary too long, and so miss our signal opportunities. In their apathy, in their self-satisfied ignorance, in their dulness of apprehension and forethought, the authorities of the University let pass the great opportunity of their time.³⁰

Perhaps as he wrote those damning words Church was thinking also of certain bishops and other dignitaries who still sat in the seat of the persecutors. For, with the Ritualist troubles to contend with, the Church of England was not out of the wood. Yet it was never his intention to colour the narrative. He aimed simply at giving the authentic impression of the twelve years, from 1833 to 1845, as it was in his mind. A suggestion of despondency, however, struck Talbot when he read through the final chapter of the manuscript in the autumn of 1886. The Dean sensed that he had disappointed him by failing to 'wind up the climax of the tragedy'. But he took no steps to mitigate what he had written. In a letter addressed to Gladstone, 23 August 1890, Church said how sorry he was not to be well enough to make the journey to Hawarden because he would like to have discussed his treatment of events in the book before it went to press. He hoped there might be a chance for them to talk about it in London. Apparently he had again been urged to add something to the concluding portion, for he explained:

My difficulty about going beyond 1845 is that the real centre of the Movement was then transferred from Oxford to London, and of that time I know little except as an outsider, and I should have to read up a good deal of matter which would be new to me. What I have written was written, in the main, four or five years ago.

But I will make enquiry at Oxford whether there is anyone who could carry on the account of the rally of the Church after the disasters of '45, and its astonishing recovery, in spite of all that happened in 1851. It would be a brighter theme; for mine is a tragic one.³¹

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Church was devoid of any trace of defeatism. In 1877, when matters looked specially black, he told Talbot, 'Nothing that has happened has shaken, and I do not think anything of the same sort could shake my belief in the present Church of England . . . there is in it a vigour, a power of recovery, and an increasing value for what is good and true, which I see nowhere else.' So the Dean confided to his friends. But he shrank from making public utterances upon which a shallow complacency could too easily fasten and feed. 'The present', as he once said in a missionary sermon at Norwich, 'is a bad judge of everything but its own duty.' The most that he would assert by way of encouragement, in his volume on the Oxford Movement, was founded upon the following of a path of duty which would bring the dawn of new glories to Anglicanism in due time. As a result of what befell the friends of Newman a working principle had been discovered at a heavy price. Instead of some fine counter-ideal to that of W. G. Ward all that could be offered was:

the resolute and serious appeal from brilliant logic, and keen sarcasm, and pathetic and impressive eloquence, to reality and experience, as well as to history, as to the positive and substantial characteristics of the traditional and actually existing English Church, shown not on paper but in work, and in spite of contradictory appearances and inconsistent elements; and along with this, an attempt to put in a fair and just light the comparative excellences and defects of other parts of Christendom, excellences to be ungrudgingly admitted, but not to be allowed to debar the recognition of defects. The feeling which had often stirred, even when things looked at the worst, that Mr. Newman had dealt unequally and hardly with the English Church, returned with gathered strength. The English Church was after all as well worth living in and fighting for as any other; it was not only in England that light and dark, in teaching and in life, were largely intermingled, and the mixture had to be largely allowed for. We had our Sparta, a noble, if a rough and incomplete one; patiently to do our best for it was better than leaving it to its fate, in obedience to signs and reasonings which the heat of strife might well make delusive. It was one hopeful token, that boasting had to be put away from us for a long time to come.³²

The Catholic faith would henceforth be best served by men 'not afraid to honour all that is great and beneficent in Rome,

not afraid with English frankness to criticize freely at home; but not to be won over, in one case, by the good things, to condone and accept the bad things; and not deterred, in the other, from service, from love, from self-sacrifice, by the presence of much to regret and to resist'. This was hardly a trumpet voluntary for Anglicanism. But it represented something of the inner fibre of loyalty in a mind which inured itself to think straight. The writer had elsewhere recognized that if the Church which he had the honour to serve was theoretically an anomaly 'it was only an anomaly among anomalies—amid universal anomaly'. Discernible beneath all else in *The Oxford Movement* are the accents of a plucky and hopeful but severely chastened spirit. And Scott Holland, who knew the Dean intimately in his last years, testified to finding in the man, amidst all his capacity for freshness and play, 'the deep undertone of one who had passed through the fire, who had survived the tremendous hour'.³³

Lord Acton put it differently when he told Mary Gladstone that she should not be surprised or disappointed at 'the touch of failure in men like the Dean of St. Paul's'. He may have put his finger on more than he knew. For to Church as a religious man the subject of human failure was of almost fascinating interest. 'Why of all the countless faces which I meet as I walk down the Strand, are the enormous majority failures—deflections from the type of beauty *possible* to them?' And taking the two greatest men known to him, Newman and Gladstone, why should he feel tenderly yet certainly disillusioned about the wisdom of each of them when the schemes they cherished came to break in their hands? He could only remark, as he studied *Sordello*, that some failures 'are greater even in disaster than the smooth perfect successes with which so many are content'. In a sermon entitled 'Failures in Life'—preached at Oxford from Newman's old pulpit at St. Mary's in 1882—he reviewed very movingly some instances of that falling short of a greatness once perceived which leaves so bitter a pang. We can feel, he says, what it is

when a man has aimed high, and has shot wide of his mark, or short of it. It is when care, and love, and toil, and hope, have been lavished on an idea or a cause; and the idea will not stand the test of conflict and time, or the cause dwindles into personal rivalries or

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strifes of words. It is when the purpose at starting was so honest, the thought so pure and high, but as time went on some secret mischief got entangled with them, and without anyone feeling it, the enterprise was turned out of its course, and from that little angle of divergence the interval grew impassable which separated the original direction and the later one. It is when life and perhaps opportunity remain, and yet the strength is spent, just when the turning point arrives, and obstacles accumulate, and the path is confused and uncertain. It is when the successful statesman sees his policy bringing forth fruits which he did not plant or look for. It is when the teacher ceases to be in sympathy with those he speaks to—when the leader grows too old to imagine and inspire, and only dogmatizes and repeats himself. It is when the sincere reformer sees his work taken out of his hands by a second generation of disciples of meaner and narrower thoughts; still worse when he becomes himself their prey and dupe, and leaves the evils of the world greater than when he assailed them. The mark of our mortality and our weakness is set on the lives of men, the flower of our race, and on the history of institutions, founded for the highest ends.³⁴

But he concluded that, even when all personal deficiencies have been overcome, ‘followers of the Cross have no right to look, in their day, for the recognition of success’.

Perhaps this is where the figure of Pusey specially belongs. Church always regarded him with great reverence, but had disagreed with his militant rigorism on more than one occasion. When Pusey died in 1882 the Dean went out of his way to pay tribute to the Anglo-Catholic veteran, of whom he declared ‘no man was more variously judged, more sternly condemned, more tenderly loved’. A month before the Doctor’s death Liddon was commissioned by him to beg Church to write what he could of the Tractarian struggle. There may be reason to see more arising from that than has appeared. *The Oxford Movement* was undertaken both as a work of piety and an appeal to history. Something was owing to Pusey and to lesser people than Pusey. Going over his memories and his material, Church saw quite a galaxy of personalities involved in what had happened, and was moved to say: ‘For their time and opportunities, the men of the movement, with all their imperfect equipment and their mistakes, still seem to me the salt of their generation.’³⁵

He speaks, it will be noticed, in the plural. And that is the

key to what the book means. Whether Church so intended it or not, *The Oxford Movement* is a profound challenge to any pseudo-historical approach which tries to utilize the whole business simply to provide background for one romantic figure. No one could have been more sensitive than Church was to the unique and paramount place of Newman in all that happened during those critical years, but he tacitly rejects any suggestion that Keble and Pusey and the rest were ciphers. It is one of those approximations which are all the more dangerous for being three-quarters true. The 'cult of the individual' reduces history to a stage for the display of the personal triumph or tragedy of one great man. But, taking both the origins and the ultimate results of the Movement into account, Church felt that a debt of recognition ought not to be withheld from the lesser figures of the drama. It was their virtues of faith and goodness which decided that, out of the apparent wreck, something permanent was achieved. Several of the men who served nearest to the leader were singled out by Church for descriptive notice. But the book was not written to provide posterity with a few glimpses of interesting people enveloped in a lost cause. The author was reminding a new generation of the cost of recovery in a struggle which had very nearly been lost.

The conclusions to draw are moral and military. When, in any society, the intellectuals and others are being demoralized by the collapse of old bulwarks the coolest men are those with the historical outlook. There were two sides to Dean Church which made him a good instructor of future Anglicans. He knew what it was to be caught up in the Tractarian crusade as a participant; but he also had a long-term mind which could regard it as being but one phase in a warfare of centuries. Setting down a permanent record of the Oxford Movement meant therefore registering a claim for it in the annals of history. It should not be allowed to pass for a freakish outburst of enthusiasm arising from the religious aberrations of a few romantic young men. There was a past in which it had serious roots and a future towards which it reached out. Permanent defeat could only belong to those who were weak enough and foolish enough to accept it. The whole promise of the Gospel was in favour of men who would learn the lessons of faith through humiliation.

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Each generation has its trials, and if we have ours, our fathers, we may be quite sure, had theirs, which looked as formidable. Meanwhile each century as it passes brings new and accumulating testimony to the power and vitality of those seeds of light and goodness which the Great Sower has planted in His field, this world. Again and again they spring up afresh, in new blessing and beauty; again and again new and varied forms of excellence and self-devotion appear; again and again after languor and corruption, Christianity asserts its inexhaustible energy of recovery, of improvement, and advance. There have been days when it seemed as if men might despair, as if it were all over with the hopes of man and the cause and truth of God. But the time has never yet been, when the cure came not at last to rebuke despair.³⁶

Church was associated for most of his life with unpopular minorities. Consequently he developed the habit of not readily admiring the rather obvious principles of the party in power. He did not favour opposition for opposition's sake; but having a quick eye for some vital principle represented in the unsuccessful side, he had the faith to believe that it would come into its own ultimately—if in the meantime some men would go on being worthy of it. His study of history, instead of leading him to see in it that devilish process called the 'dialectic of struggle', taught him to respect the Christian concept of 'trial' as the natural condition of existence. Nor did this imply that spineless resignation is a religious duty. On the contrary, it had the effect of making him couple the idea of penitence with that of learning new lessons manfully. It meant going forward with a confident expectation that the old principle—rejected by the majority but secretly refined and strengthened by the elect—would triumph when the next turn of Providence should duly arrive.

Even where scarcely any saving virtue had been discernible, and the losers had deservedly brought judgement upon themselves, Church saw the possibility that they might, out of sheer ordeal, discover one. This thought occupied him very much at the time of the Franco-Prussian War and caused him suddenly, after all his previous disgust at the French character, to prefer France in her humiliation to the victorious Germany. 'I think —granting war at all—that there are occasions, as in the struggle of the Dutch against Spain, when disasters are a possession worth having for a nation, almost as valuable as successes.'

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They are measures and standards of national temper, endurance and self-devotion.' So, he told the astonished Blachford, he approved the decision of France to resist, even at the point of desperation. And to Asa Gray he prophesied that the scientific militarism of Germany would not escape, in its turn, the law of retributive justice. The French, he considered, were 'too grand a race, with all their faults, to be missed out of the civilized world'.³⁷

No doubt this sense of a cycle of judgement in human affairs had, and especially for Church, a Biblical derivation. But the idea of an unfolding process—of defeated elements reasserting themselves in the synthesis of a new situation—was certainly a familiar one in the nineteenth-century attitude to history. The survival of nations and institutions could be regarded as being bound up with their ability to adapt themselves to 'developing conditions of reality'. One of the merits of Church is that (though perhaps not consciously) he grafted a Christian version of this nineteenth-century outlook on to the Christian version which another Oriel man had made of the philosophical outlook of the eighteenth century. Subsumed in all Church's reflections upon the changing scenes of life is the unchanged moral foundation established for him by Bishop Butler. Something prophetic from the age of Newton lived on into the age of Darwin and Marx because of his ever-hybrid mind.

VIII. THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT: BISHOP BUTLER

We have already noted the resolve made by Church as a student to wrestle with the substance and steep himself in the spirit of Butler. A recurrent feature in the Oxford Movement is the way its leading adherents treat the author of the *Analogy* as the master-builder by whom the foundations of religious reality had been laid afresh for modern thinkers. They speak of him with awe and seek to model themselves upon his austere reserve. To him the great Vicar of St. Mary's bore testimony and pointed his own disciples. The gravest charge, indeed, that Gladstone could lay against Newman in the end was that he was 'thoroughly unsound as a Butlerian'.³⁸

Be that as it may, what drew the Oxford men of their generation to revere him as they did can be gathered from the lecture

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on Bishop Butler delivered by Church in 1880.* The characteristics which he admired are evident. To begin with, Butler's writing reflects a complete lack of anxiety about the sufficiency of truth to vindicate itself. He is a rebuke to all that is meretricious. Having schooled himself to see things as they are he can afford to speak quietly. The facts are good enough for him. Church himself had a sort of scientist's reverence for accurate statements, and his suspicion of 'strong words' was a Tractarian inheritance derived from Butler. Like that master—'open-eyed, cautious, watchful against the tricks and idols of his own thoughts'—he too set himself 'to see the truth, not one-sided and exaggerated, but balanced and completed by all that bears on it; not trusting itself to precarious and arbitrary *a priori* reasonings, but resting on foundations, however homely and unambitious, of facts within our reach'. Consonant with such an attitude was Butler's courageous acceptance of 'the poorness of everything here—the poorness of human life, the poorness of our knowledge, the poorness of our acquaintance even with religion, the poorness and unsatisfactoriness of all ways possible to us of examining and proving it'.³⁹

Nevertheless where these austere qualities of mind would lead us to expect a Hume if not a Voltaire, we find in Butler something as transcendental as Kant and incomparably more fervent. He has a faith to balance generously on the positive side all that reason, without it, would find mean. For although human life is in itself a poor thing, our moral capacity makes the practical concern for each of us entirely bracing. Our nature is 'a part of something, the greatness of which no thought can fathom and no words express'. Man in his narrow, limited condition is yet under the government of God. He has his place in an infinite, incomprehensible kingdom whose 'majesty is reflected on his life and fate'. That is why, as Church says, there are passages in Butler which, though at first sight they seem dry and commonplace, can always open up for those who read between the lines 'a glimpse of the very foundations of the world and nature'. He sees the prospect before him not only through rational eyes, but also with a visionary discernment capable of approaching the very ecstasy of the mystics. Butler in the *Analogy* may deter us by his refusal to go one inch

* Vide *Pascal and Other Sermons*, 25–51.

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beyond the plainest of appeals to common reason. Yet, all the time, this severely honest defender of the Faith was at one with both Roman Catholics and Methodists in entertaining at the centre of his being a religion of the heart. Indeed, says Church,

in his sermons on the Love of God he is not afraid of soaring as high as the loftiest flights of contemplative devotion. Through his restrained and measured diction, restrained and measured both from temper and habit, and from the awfulness of the subject, shines the intense faith of adoring contemplation; you see a soul to which is present that vision of God's goodness and beauty, which transported St. Theresa, St. Francis, and the poet of the *Paradiso*.⁴⁰

Of the various strands apparent to him in Butler's thought Church himself absorbed at least three. Let us call them the sense of the inscrutable in nature; the sense of the tragic in life; and the sense of Providence in the sphere of grace. Even though modified by what came to him in the course of his humanistic studies and his experience of party strifes, these Butlerian elements remained dominant in Church. It should be observed how he applied them to the nineteenth-century categories. The two main fields of challenge to the thinking of the age generally, and to Anglicanism in particular, were: first, the development of the Roman Catholic doctrine of authority under the stimulus of Newman; and, secondly, the growth of religious doubt on account of the shocks administered to traditional theology by scientific inquiry. Church considered that both these movements of thought had, for emotional reasons, gone off into quite excessive conclusions.

Neither the secular doctrine of Agnosticism nor the clerical doctrine of Infallibility (using those terms in a sense not to be strictly tied by the definitions of Professor T. H. Huxley and the Pope) could be justified on a balanced view of the widest evidence available. Advocates of either doctrine, by pushing one kind of evidence to its logical extreme, were as guilty of presumption as the Deists had been when they undertook to prescribe what could, and what could not, take place in the government of the universe. Systems so assured will always be an affront to the Bible evidence of a living God. Faith conceives Him to be at work in a world which is by no means an open book to His creatures. On the prophetic reckoning, there-

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fore, the nineteenth-century legislators of human destiny were claiming too much for themselves. That is why the weapon which Bishop Butler had used against the Deists lent itself admirably for a man like Church—being both a believer and a critic—to turn against the schools of presumption in his day. It would be an exaggeration to think of him as the conscious founder of a Neo-Butlerian critique. For, as usual, Church's thrusts were small-scale affairs, in no way portentous but significant enough if anyone had ears to hear.

His religious outlook derives from a clear understanding that the Christian revelation is more strictly limited than we should have liked it to be, but that it is nevertheless infinitely precious because sufficient to bring every man to glory. That in Jesus 'the Word was made flesh' means that we are henceforth better off than the prophets were of old. We are not groping towards the light but have it as an assured possession. All questions have not been answered for us, but 'there is one veil the less on the unfathomable mystery of that still unseen Kingdom', the key to which the Father has kept in His own hands.

We know much; but what we know is out of all proportion to the immensity of what we do not know, of what we cannot know. Our knowledge of God's Kingdom, of its works and ways, is like all our knowledge of the highest kind, a combination of light and certainty on some great points, with ignorance and darkness on others equally great. There are those who, because we cannot know all, or all that we should like to know, think that we can know nothing. There are those who think that no question can be asked about the ways of God which cannot be answered. Neither remember the most familiar conditions of our knowledge.⁴¹

Some of Church's most incisive writing takes the form of a protest against these two extreme attitudes—that of theological Infallibility and that of agnostic Despair.

IX. INFALLIBILITY

To Church's mind it was one of the divine mercies that the survival of truth and goodness from age to age did not have to depend upon the wisdom or the charity of those in priestly office. That sobering reflection is forced home very candidly

in a sermon of his entitled the 'Imperfections of Religious Men'.^{*} The challenge, as he saw it, consisted not in the story of personal weaknesses such as are common to men, but the shortcomings and failures peculiar to religious persons and 'the faults of their religion itself'. If anyone thinks, says the preacher, that God when He sent the light of His truth into the world would safeguard it from the possibility of being corrupted by His servants, he need only read the Bible to be undeceived. 'His first and primary gift to man is that he is a free moral agent: and with that He has given nothing to man . . . which man may not, if he will, abuse and spoil.' The recorded behaviour of the custodians of the Gospel, from the very days of the Apostles and since, should instruct us what to expect. The zeal and vehemence of great teachers and champions of the faith in the fight against heresy were not infrequently the means of letting loose a spirit quite alien to that of Christ's love. 'There is scarcely a true principle of religious faith, there is scarcely a natural and pure instinct of worship, there is scarcely a noble work of self-devotion and usefulness, there is scarcely a wisely planned and generous institution, on which the mistakes of good men have not brought discredit, perhaps at last extinguished and abolished it.' Arising out of such considerations a further conclusion can hardly be escaped. The imperfections of the Christian Church itself at every period must not be blinked. 'The ideal of sanctity, of infallibility, of consistency, of unity, is what ought to have been; what has been, is matter of history.'⁴²

So we leave an uncomfortable sermon and face the problem of where authority is to be found in religion. The imperfections displayed for us in Christian history have already shaken our confidence about the fitness of anyone to lay down the law from heaven. But this is not to say that the Society which Christ founded does not, by His mercy, still possess the essential authority with which He entrusted it for the purpose of bringing souls to salvation. The Church Catholic remains, and will remain, the rock of hope for the world. Though its members have to wage continuous battle against evil within and without, it is permanently established and has God's Spirit by which it shall prevail. From no other source can sinners receive the

* Vide *Cathedral and University Sermons*, 274-93.

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Word and the Sacraments which are to unite them to their redeeming Lord unto life eternal. The function of the Church is in this way to be the Body of Christ.

All this Dean Church steadfastly believed. But he was equally sure that these tremendous facts did not confer upon any actual hierarchy of men the power to define the will of God absolutely. He took his stand on the known facts of history to affirm that churchmen, acting and speaking in an official capacity, have sometimes been grievously in the wrong. On certain points where the truth had to be newly apprehended they failed, in the name of the Church, to apprehend it. And they may do so again. But, overruling this situation, Providence operates and always has operated by a mixed arrangement to ensure that men in any generation shall have sufficient religious assurance to live by. The Anglican thesis, according to Hooker, is content to suggest that there is not one but several keys of authority, all needing to be used in conjunction when the saving truth may seem to be in doubt. What is laid down by the Church for necessary obedience must not fly in the face of Scripture and Reason. And if this in some concrete situation gives the individual conscience precedence, temporarily, over the previous experience of the teaching Church, would it be deemed amongst Anglicans that the principle of private judgement had made shipwreck of the whole concept of authority? Was it not, indeed, a blessing of the Reformation that, despite all that went wrong, there should emerge an English Church to proclaim authority by these complementary standards? Dean Church's answer to the questions we have raised is not in doubt because it was his guiding principle to believe that the realities of history come in to endorse the realities of Christian truth.

But this reveals an attitude of mind clean contrary in the last resort to that of the leading religious intellect of the century. Newman had decided his line upon very different considerations from those which weighed with Church. For him the question of Providence posed itself as a more abstract and philosophical matter. Seeking security rather than adventure, he could believe only in a sort of 'gold standard' of authority. In a world where pagan thought and secular politics threatened to carry all before them, what kind of protection could be expected —either for the individual believer or for the Gospel itself—

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from an institution which (as his friend openly confessed) had been precariously launched and only equipped with a 'slender outfit of appliances'. For, what Church was saying had more than a reference to Anglican adjustments at the Reformation: his implications, if sound, related to the whole Christian institution from the start. But surely, if God intends to save men's souls out of this evil world, He will not leave them so ill-provided to do battle against such odds? How else can the household of faith, as Christ founded it, be recognized unless it is manifestly impregnable to all forms of disputation and doubt? That, or something like that, is the case which Church understood Newman to be putting in his *Apologia*.

His review of this classic work appeared in the *Guardian*, 22 June 1864, and might properly be regarded as another apologia in miniature, a worthy pendant to Newman's own, despite the difference in occasion and scale. It is, indeed, a piece of essential reading for anyone tempted to approach the *Apologia* with partisan bitterness, either as an anti-Roman or an anti-Anglican. The assumption throughout is that Newman's grave declaration was not produced for party purposes but simply as a personal disclosure and defence. Accordingly, it was Church's personal connexion with Newman, and with events at Oxford between 1833 and 1845, which gave him special qualifications for commenting upon it. There is probably no other review quite of this kind. In every paragraph the equilibrium displayed is a triumph over the dichotomy which existed between the writer's love for a friend and his entire disagreement with his religious position. Speaking of the failure of Anglicanism to satisfy Newman, he says:

It had given up as impracticable much that the Church had once attempted. It did not pretend to rise so high, to answer such great questions, to lay down such precise definitions. Wisely modest, or timidly uncertain—mindful of the unalterable limits of our human condition, *we* say; forgetful, *he* thought, or doubting, or distrustful, of the gifts and promises of a supernatural dispensation—it certainly gave no such complete and decisive account of the condition and difficulties of religion and the world, as had been done once, and as there were some who did still. There were problems which it did not profess to solve; there were assertions which others boldly risked, and which it shrank from making; there were demands which it

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ventured not to put forward. Again, it was not refined enough for him; it had little taste for the higher forms of the saintly ideal; it wanted the austere and high-strung virtues; it was contented, for the most part, with the domestic type of excellence, in which goodness merged itself in the interests and business of the common world, and working in them, took no care to disengage itself or mark itself off, as something distinct from them and above them. Above all, Anglicanism was too limited; it was local, insular, national; its theory was made for special circumstances; and he describes in a remarkable passage how, in contrast with this, there rung in his ears continually the proud self-assertion of the other side, *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*. What he wanted, what it was the main object of his life to find, was a great and effective engine against Liberalism; for years he tried, with eager but failing hope, to find it in the theology and the working of the English Church; when he made up his mind that Anglicanism was not strong enough for the task, he left it for a system which had one strong power; which claimed to be able to shut up dangerous thought.⁴³

This is where Church, as he read the *Apologia* and reflected upon the dominant fear which had possessed Newman, began to feel himself estranged. His own reading of the modern situation, gleaned from some painful attention to the topmost authors, scientists, and politicians of the day, brought him to more qualified views. He had learnt to distinguish between the conscientious inquiries and aspirations of one sort of Liberal and the sheer arrogance of another. Experience in Gladstonian circles did not indicate to him that Liberalism was necessarily diabolical, a thing incapable of being redeemed and directed to the glory of God. And, taking the widest survey of civilized history, he saw good and evil so incredibly mingled in systems and policies as well as persons, that he shrank from drawing lines permanently and dramatically between sacred interests and profane. Church believed, as surely as Newman did, that the carnal mind can only be saved when it submits voluntarily to be crucified in some real sense for the love of Christ. But from that conviction he could not jump to the wholly different conclusion that the human spirit, in order to be safe from suicide, needs to be intellectually castrated and penned up within some vast, all-wise scheme of theological control. Even to contemplate such a solution of the cultural predicament was, to him, as futile as it was wrong:

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Without infallibility, it is said, men will turn free-thinkers and heretics; but don't they, *with* it? and what is the good of the engine if it will not do its work? And if it is said that this is the fault of human nature, which resists what provokes and checks it, still that very thing, which infallibility was intended to counteract, goes on equally, whether it comes into play or not. Meanwhile, truth does stay in the world, the truth that there has been among us a Divine Person, of whom the Church throughout Christendom is the representative, memorial, and the repeater of His message; doubtless, the means of knowledge are really guarded; yet we seem to receive that message as we receive the witness of moral truth; and it would not be contrary to the analogy of things here if we had often got to it at last through mistakes. But when it is reached, there it is, strong in its own power; and it is difficult to think that if it is not strong enough in itself to stand, it can be protected by a claim of infallibility. A future, of which infallibility is the only hope and safeguard, seems to us indeed a prospect of the deepest gloom.⁴⁴

This is a matter of permanent consequence to the race. The development of secular thought, the subtle undermining of primary religious beliefs on a wide scale, either accidentally by mundane pressures or deliberately by propaganda, and the vista of disillusionment opened up by psychological studies, have taught the twentieth century that the Christian faith does not enjoy any easier tenure since the grave concern of the nineteenth century was first stated. Oppressed by this, we need to know how much weight to attach to Church's confidence that religion must go unarmed. Is he merely voicing one of the shallow optimisms of the Victorian age when freedom and progress on many fronts seemed permanently assured? Can we feel that he appreciated the terrible reality of what Newman had in mind that he should so fear the 'all-corroding, all-dissolving scepticism' of the human intellect in the sphere of religion?

There is evidence that Church had taken his own measure of the threat.

X. IN FACE OF THE ABYSS

Against stark atheism Dean Church has no arguments to offer. But living in an age of religious and intellectual upheaval, he expected that for many people the faith would be difficult and

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almost impossible. All sorts of intermediate positions were likely to be found between that of the convinced Christian and that of the hardened scoffer. Christianity, therefore, had to address itself more than ever to inquirers. Only, said the Dean, three great axioms need to be assumed from the start. First come the existence and supremacy of goodness, justice, and love. Conversely, sin must be reckoned with as a reality. The second assumption is that 'the object of life here is to *do*, and not merely to *know*'. This means using knowledge for the meeting of a trial, the fulfilling of a charge, and the forming of a character. And, thirdly, the Christian religion assumes that 'all good gifts of light and truth, as well as of power and holiness, come from God' and are to be sought by faithfulness and prayer. In other words, Church refuses to enter a debate with those for whom morality and theism are open questions. He was quite right to keep within such limits. What power he possessed lay in his ability to deepen, or open up more widely, the considerations which weigh with the sort of mind that already is willing to believe if it can.⁴⁵

Yet, in practice, he goes beyond this on occasion to utter warnings to the sophisticated class who may presumably overhear what the Christian preacher has to say. The theme of Church's sermons now and again indicates his sense of being, amidst the new generation, something of a St. Paul amongst the Athenian disputants.* He felt the atmosphere of doubt in the air of the 'seventies and 'eighties. No man alive had any theological or philosophical means of dispelling it. But in two directions there were attitudes which laid themselves open to rebuke. The Dean had no sympathy for either of them. First of all was a group of writers who seemed to hail what they considered the death of orthodox Christianity with a sort of bright-eyed satisfaction. To them, as intellectuals, it offered an opportunity of constructing something as good, if not better, to take the place of the faith once reverenced by their fathers. To Renan, for instance, belonged 'the ambiguous honour of making the Bible an object of such interest to French readers as it never was before, at the cost of teaching them to find in it a reflection of their own characteristic ways of looking at life

* e.g., 'The Life of Intellectual Self-Sufficiency'; 'Responsibility for our Belief'; 'The Convenient Season'.

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and the world. It is not', remarked Church, 'an easy thing to do with such a book as the Bible; but he has done it.' In England he noted with equal disapproval how Mrs. Humphry Ward followed up the success of her novel, *Robert Elsmere*, with serious proposals to re-make the Christian religion, using the Bible as a sort of Homer, calculated to 'satisfy a class of clever and cultivated persons'.⁴⁶

The other group against which Church's face was sternly set is not to be identified in his writings with any actual names. Yet the period can easily supply representatives both of a materialistic philosophy and a type of literary cynicism based upon it. Church sees this phenomenon of his times as a spiral of descent to the moral abyss. After we have accepted it, as a conclusion at the academic level, that thoughts and acts are physically determined for us, a lower stage soon appears:

It is when intellect and reasoning persuade us that this world after all is our best and satisfying portion; that we are wisest when we most follow our pleasure; that the lusts of the flesh and the pomps of the world have a good deal to say for themselves; that we are made for this world—made for things *seen*; and that of another, as we can know nothing, we were best *believe* nothing. Intellect will do this for us if we will let it; it will do it in hard-headed and powerful systems of abstract thought; it will do it in rich and passionate poetry, pathetic or tender or rapturous; it will do it in the beauty and magnificence of art. And descending to a yet lower deep, the questioning spirit which has called evil good finds it no hard task to prove that good is evil. Then intellect has indeed sinned its deadliest sin, when it has not only beguiled the will to break down the eternal barriers between goodness and sin, but has argued the soul out of its instinctive recognition and admiration of goodness.⁴⁷

Hell is reached when, like the Pharisees, men have so blinded themselves by a prolonged course of sophistry that they can stand insensitive before the appeal of truth, speaking to them face to face as Love Incarnate. A simple but terrible passage in one of Church's books is that where he pictures Christ finally reduced to silence by the contradiction of learned enemies:

They were provoked by hearing the truth. . . . After that He had nothing more to say. All He could do was to let them see how He could suffer. After teaching had been thrown away, after rebuke

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had been in vain, He could only endure. He stood before them in their power, and for Himself He would say nothing. They knew as well as He knew what they had seen, what their consciences and their convictions were aware of, about the truth of His ministry and message. There was nothing more to be said, and He held His peace. . . . It was their hour, and the power of darkness.⁴⁸

There was, however, quite a different sort of unbelief. Sensitive men who are neither glib nor vicious, nor cynical nor proud, may be bowed down for sheer sadness as they contemplate the apparent fact that 'Nature in its garb of fate and necessity has shut out God'. Towards these Church shows himself reverently anxious. If, after a careful and responsible assessment of all that hangs in the balance, not just for himself, but for the past, present, and future of the race, some honest thinker comes reluctantly to conclude that the Christian Gospel is inadequate to its claims, then be it so. But before that conclusion is reached Church is desirous to appeal for an adequate and worthy consideration of what the choices are. As a preliminary he asks that people of modern education should not be impatient of theology as such. For, despite the follies of theologians, it has a weighty claim to be heard when men come to reason seriously about so high a matter as the ways of God. People may all too easily talk about religion as a landsman talks about the management of a ship, or apply to it ideas like 'those of a schoolboy about the work of a Cabinet'. Church admits, from the other side, that theologians and preachers 'sometimes unhappily deal with the great theories and conclusions of science in a way which scientific men justly resent as impertinent ignorance, knowing as they do how solid, and vast, and difficult a thing science is . . .'. But, he goes on, 'religion too is a deep and substantial thing . . . and it must be *known*, if it is to be spoken of reasonably and justly and wisely'. Christianity therefore ought not to be treated as though it were a speculation. Similarly, on any well-informed reckoning, the authority of the Christian Church, despite its sins and divisions, 'is yet the master fact of our history and our society'.⁴⁹

Most relevant of all, there needs to be faced the continuing presence in the world, over the course of centuries, of so strange and lovely a thing as the Christian character. Not only by the way it has been displayed in the saints, but also in countless

believers, this ought to commend itself as a unique—and, indeed, as the most precious—possession of the race. Because of it, earthly situations are always liable to be transformed into something of glory. So the pleading goes in a small volume which Church dedicated to Lord Blachford under the title, *The Discipline of Christian Character*. The emergence of such an element into human affairs, as well as its power to survive, requires more than an accident of history to account for it. Here is something which, since ‘it came into being among men from the presence of Jesus Christ has never died out, has never become out of date’.⁵⁰

The Dean, in urging all this, is aware that many noble names can be cited in support of the austere view that morality alone, without any belief in God or any hope of the hereafter, can and should produce the flower of human goodness. He meets this contention in an address delivered at Cambridge in 1882 on ‘Life in the Light of Immortality’, and warns us about the negative basis upon which a morality of hopelessness would have to be built:

You may find it in those awful—alas! shall we say unanswerable pages, in which the poets of disappointment and despair—Byron, Oberman, Heine, Leopardi—have concentrated feelings not confined to themselves, about the cruelties and treacheries of nature, about the ‘breaking of dreams’, and the emptiness of having lived—about the dreadfulness of a world in which the mightiest power is pain, and the only certainty the perishing of the fairest and best. You may find it in those majestic strains, in which Lucretius, solemnly and serenely closing the door of religion for ever on mankind, reveals, in spite of himself and his professions of content, the unutterable sadness of a noble spirit, which can see no intelligible upshot to the destinies of men.

He does not deny that there ‘may be a tragic grandeur in the call upon man to die, in the face of all this, with the steady refusal to look beyond, with the deliberate rejection of a hope which he once believed he had’. But he thinks that such a ‘magnificent and imposing audacity . . . does not reckon with human nature’, and so will utterly fail to become the basis of morality for the race in general.⁵¹

Plainly this is not a facile conclusion. Valuing as he did the gifts of civilization, and recognizing them to be divinely

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bestowed, Church was no shallow optimist. He never disguised from himself the truth that life is bound up with tragedy as well as ignorance. Even in the light of the Gospel, this is not an easy-going world. Consequently there is always, at least beneath the surface, an awestruck sense of pathos in what he wrote. ‘We are like children lost on a wide common on a dark night.’ That, he says, is a thought which is bound to occur—perhaps not to the brave or to the dull or insensible who never look forward; ‘but all of us are not insensible, and all of us are not brave’. Yet such feelings, however natural, need to be countered by the providential view for which there is enough evidence to make it tenable by men of faith. It is a question of morale: ‘all dwelling on what we can know nothing of and cannot help is one of those wrong things which we *ought* to, and which we really have *power* to drive out of our minds.’ This point has force when it is remembered how a great novelist, concentrating on the darkness of our ‘wide common’, raised up for himself the figment of malevolent powers directing their spite against a lost race of puppets. For Dean Church, the facts of nature in themselves are neutral; if not man’s friends neither are they his enemies. ‘To think only of what is against us’, he concludes, ‘is to think only half the truth. And half the truth becomes falsehood when we think of it as if it were the whole truth.’ It is as though he had read Thomas Hardy and then cleared his mind by taking an actual stroll over Egdon Heath by daylight.⁵²

Church was drawing towards the end of his course when pessimism became the regular thing amongst English intellectuals. For his generation belief and unbelief were matters for earnestness. Leslie Stephen, for instance, though somewhat junior to Church, represents the sober and responsible type of atheist towards whom the Dean’s opposition was mingled with a tone of real deference. In the presence of such men he stood forth to appeal for the truth as he saw it rather than to prove himself in the right. But this temper in Church’s writings began to have an old-fashioned ring about it. Samuel Butler, author of *Erewhon*, was bringing to his rejection of Christianity the first breath of actual flippancy. Faith had to reckon with fun. Consequently, in the face of popular agnosticism, as the new

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century dawned there came to be two lines of reply from the Christian side. The more effective, especially after Oscar Wilde and Max Beerbohm had set the fashion for audacity in writing, was the Chestertonian style. Confident, paradoxical, smart at repartee and very much on the offensive, this method carries forward the lineage of W. G. Ward. Perhaps a slick and summary form of contribution is specially suited to the talents of literary laymen who are desirous of striking a blow in their own way for the defence of the Faith. The other sort of reply to modern unbelief has come chiefly from clerical writers and is marked by a conscientious desire to meet serious opponents seriously. Learned churchmen of the calibre of Gore and Henson declare themselves sensitive to the weight of anti-Christian arguments and show no disposition to laugh matters off. Writers of this school command respect by having something of the judge or the surgeon in their tone. That is to say, they handle the theme of man's predicament with a reverence for what is involved. The eighteenth-century *gravitas* of Bishop Butler still lingers about their pages. And it is by way of Dean Church that the Butler tradition has come down. He, for instance, whether it be Anglicanism that is on trial or Christianity itself, would never countenance a mode of defence which sought to settle the case by some clever *tour de force*. Nor would he allow one part of the evidence to go by default just because it might suit his case better to concentrate wittily upon another. When he made a choice it was with his eyes wide open, and he avoids the temptation of trying to be too convincing when some other soul has to make its choice.

His own position, one would suppose, came by way of indirect persuasion. He was called into the succession of minds to which he truly belonged by reason of his ability to appreciate what they appreciated about the offer of the Gospel to fallen man. In stating the considerations to which Pascal's decision seems to set the seal of finality, Church was speaking not only for Pascal but echoing what he had learnt, through Newman and Butler, for himself:

Christianity satisfies the conditions which it ought to satisfy, if it is a religion for the world, a religion to demand the attention of a serious man. It is not bound to tell us everything; it need not clear up all difficulties. It must not be a privilege for an aristocracy of

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thinkers. It must be a full counterpart to all those great and grave facts in which all men have a share, which make up our perplexity and our misery, and yet impel us to hope.⁵³

XI. NO 'SHIPWRECKED MARINER'*

That Church's own faith is reflected in these conclusions may be deduced from what he advocated and what he admired. The issues between faith and scepticism (so he implies) have been stated by Pascal in a form which cannot be improved upon. If it comes to giving reasons he will range himself, despite some small reservations, with the author of the *Pensées*.

But, whereas Newman leans towards Pascal in the emotional intensity of his religious commitment, Church exhibits more the coolness and reserve of Bishop Butler. It is perhaps a question of temperament how far the thoughtful Christian can feel satisfied to accept 'things as they are' even when faith and reason have agreed that the available light in our dark world is sufficient to walk by. Newman recognized his debt to the *Analogy* but saw need to utter a *caveat*. 'Butler', he said, 'teaches us that probability is the guide of life. The danger of this doctrine, in the case of many minds, is its tendency to destroy in them absolute certainty, leading them to consider every conclusion as doubtful, and resolving truth into an opinion, which it is safe indeed to obey or to profess, but not possible to embrace with full internal assent.' Church either felt less apprehension about this danger, or else he conceived it to be inescapable.⁵⁴

To him faithfulness was the final evidence of faith, not the embracing of an adequate solution addressed to the mind. The religious situation is always unsatisfactory to the spectator—and even to the well-disposed believer if he casts a critical eye upon it. But the Christian's duty is to 'make do and mend'. This applies to the temporal order of our earthly life no less than to the institutional life of a Church. The ecclesiastical

* Cf. *The Message of Peace*, 40:

Tum porro puer, ut saevis projectus ab undis
Navita nudus, humi jacet, infans, indigus omni
Vitali auxilio . . .
Quoi tantum in vita restet transire malorum.

Lucretius V.

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history of his own time provided the Dean with object lessons to indicate that our wisdom as individuals lies in the category of morale. The choice is between the way of Lamennais and the way of Lacordaire. The one—brilliant, high-minded, impatient of anything less than the ideal—came only to bitter revulsion and a crash. The other lived to stir the religious heart of France because he ‘was content to accept, without quarrelling with it, a state of facts which he did not like, but could not alter: to work in the harness provided for him by an ordering which was not his own’.⁵⁵

Such a comparison helps us to understand Church against a background of men cleverer, better-known, perhaps more interesting but not more courageous and sane, than himself. The matter can be put very simply. A major phenomenon of the nineteenth century is the number of biographies which disclose a sort of religious shipwreck. In England for obvious reasons it was generally an Anglican upbringing which came to pieces under stress, leaving the moral personality broken in mid career. The memoirs of gifted people in that era often bring before us the sort of man who has had to reconstruct his whole outlook, perhaps as an atheist, perhaps as a Roman Catholic, with whatever the storm has left. By comparison, no doubt, the faith which does not founder makes much tamer reading. Yet, suppose some still-orthodox Christian, some continuing member of the Established Church, really had gone through the fire and water of a similar ordeal? That is the tantalizing thought which suggests itself about Dean Church.

Unfortunately for us, he was the sort who covered up his tracks deliberately. Suspecting religious autobiography, he took care also to leave no diaries or notebooks. The converted man, he said, stands in danger of being ‘thrown inward on himself, to watch and study with unhealthy eagerness the vicissitudes of what is to him the most interesting of histories, the history of his religious experience. . . . It is not everyone who can dare to repeat the experiment of St. Augustine’s confessions.’ We are left, then, to wonder at the serene blend of scepticism and orthodoxy, of unworldliness and avidity for life, which characterizes the mind of this unusual man. Deep-grounded like Newman in the things of the soul; cultivated, circumspect and stoical as Matthew Arnold in things of the

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head, he yet knew little of the submerged pessimism of either. How he arrived at so untemperamental an attitude his readers are not allowed to know.⁵⁶

Perhaps Church no less than Newman, but in a different way, had had a personal crisis to face. The apparent absence of any psychological upheaval is less important than the fact that a wonderful equilibrium marked his mature thought. Is it possible to hazard some approximate date when the principal phase of adult adjustment became completed in a mind which grew rather than jumped to its convictions? Perhaps it would not be an improbable speculation to assign it to some time in 1847, when for a whole year Church was away from England. Then, at the age of thirty-two—sleeping in hovels with Greek peasants, noting the pell-mell sights of Constantinople, gossiping in Italian inns and listening to revolutionary orators in France—the man within him had time to forget the don. The atmosphere of Oxford since 1845 was something from which he, like Clough, could at last escape. Even in January on the voyage out it is possible to sense from his account of it a certain accession of new gaiety, as of one entering upon the risks and glories of spiritual freedom. Another Fellow of Oriel, Henry James Coleridge, was to have accompanied him. But when the time came Church found himself a stranger on his own amongst the various passengers aboard the *Ripon*.

The vessel, by modern standards, was an odd enough contraption in that transitional stage when steam had not entirely ousted sails. Such a ship, he noted, had looked to his eyes very big in Southampton docks, ‘as if nothing in the world but herself could move her’, but before they had got through the Bay of Biscay she ‘had had the shine completely taken out of her and had been made to look uncommonly small’. She encountered during that voyage storms of unusual violence. Labouring heavily past Cape Finisterre, all on board felt trepidation because fresh in everyone’s memory was the great *Liverpool*, lost at that point as a total wreck about a year before. Church, when he described this hazardous passage, said he would not in future boast of his supposed toughness as a sailor.

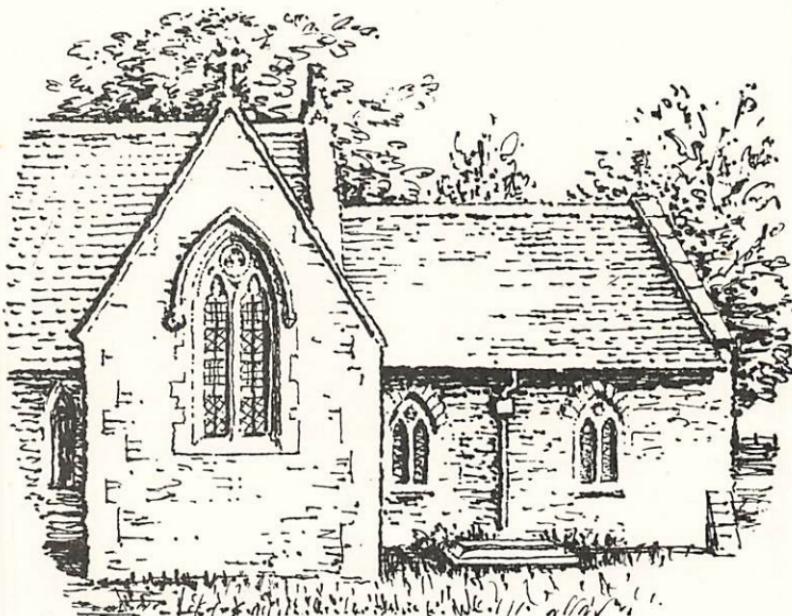
For him this was a plain reporting of events. But, for us, may not the whole account of the ship’s struggle form an

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allegory of what the Christian religion everywhere, and Anglicanism in particular, was going through where Church was concerned?

The *Ripon* is unlucky. She will get no credit for this voyage, because it has been so long and bad; but people say, who know what they are talking about, that it might have gone hard with us on Monday if she had not been a very good ship. She is very slow . . . and she gets well abused for being so slow. But it was quite a grand sight to see her at work in the storm. She rose to the frightful looking seas as if she had a huge spring which shot her bows up out of the deep trough of the waves, and not one of them rolled into her though they hung over her as high almost as her chimney-tops. I had quite got over all my squeamishness by that time, and could look on the process without any physical discomfort. And now that it is over, it is quite a sight to see once in one's life. It is not merely the storm, but the battling between the ship and the storm. You can, without any strong stretch of imagination, fancy life in both of them, each wave taking its blow as it passes, sometimes successfully, sometimes parried, but always with a single wild effort, spent altogether when done; and the continuous sustained strength of the ship, never exhausted, and directed with a mixture of calmness and anxiety—the idea of the man at the wheel—seems to pass into the whole machine.⁵⁷

PART SIX



Whatley Chuchyard

CHAPTER TEN

The Personal Thread



I. FRIENDSHIPS: LORD BLACHFORD

THE rest is epilogue. But the proportions would be all wrong unless, after considering the scope of his mind, we also took a concluding look at the man himself in his personal relations. A single hint of the reason for this will suffice. When Talbot tried to tell Church what he owed to him he mentioned his power of transmitting to others something of Newman's spirit, and said that to have been the disciple of such a master was no ordinary talent. To this the Dean replied that 'one of the greatest of "talents" is having friends'. So saying, he put the emphasis in the right place and indicated a principal source of his own peculiar charm. There is an ingredient which makes youth and age vitally of a piece in some characters. It is notable how memories of past happiness were caught up into the surviving friendships of Dean Church's later years to form a sort of Indian summer before the end.¹

The intimacy between him and George Moberly, begun when they went walking and talking together in the Isle of Wight during a certain vacation in the 'thirties, was deepened as the Churches became frequent guests of the Headmaster at Winchester. Mr. Crokat settled at St. Cross, and a few miles away the Moberlys established a rustic retreat for themselves by taking over Fieldhouse Farm. Its proximity to Hursley brought Church, as a visitor, into the circle of that writer of religious fiction, disciple of Mr. Keble and missionary zealot, Charlotte Mary Yonge. And naturally his Hampshire connexion was strengthened when he got Fred on to the foundation at Winchester College. But in any case there were occasions enough when the rectory children from Whatley, like the Bennetts from Sparkford, were taken down to make up a jolly party

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with the numerous brood of young Moberlys. These family gatherings were maintained after the Doctor moved from Winchester to become Bishop of Salisbury. The three Church girls stayed at the palace under Mrs. Moberly's care while their parents were arranging the removal to St. Paul's Deanery. Helen and Mary, incidentally, were taken over to Salisbury for their Confirmation in 1873. Moberly, whose Conservatism in religious politics was strangely leavened with Liberal convictions about general affairs, kept in 'constant and brotherly correspondence' with the Dean during a period when ecclesiastical issues were not easy for High Churchmen of their critical stamp. But, despite an Oxford reputation for intellect in earlier days, the Bishop lived to exhibit deteriorating faculties for some time before his death in 1885. He hoped that Church would one day succeed him at Salisbury; and in his darker moods looked forward to the brightening effect of his kinsman's visits. 'When Uncle Richard stayed with us', wrote Miss Moberly, 'we used to observe laughingly that the first half hour was generally spent in a discussion between him and my father as to the relative greatness of Napoleon's generals, and in going over some details of the Peninsular War, in which they both took the greatest interest.' With Moberly, as with Asa Gray, the Dean apparently never knew a serious disagreement.²

But on a matter of principle and judgement he could be unsparingly critical even of his friends—as Newman, Mozley, and Rogers each discovered in turn. Old associations purchased no leniency if some obligation of the mind became infringed. Love had to be without dissimulation. Affections held while mental positions were expected to fluctuate. The years which saw Mozley moving somewhat out of sympathy with Anglo-Catholic developments found Church apparently moving more closely in. Yet a difference like that was as nothing compared with their common convictions as men of faith. It is fascinating to watch how, after Newman went, they seemed to share his Anglican mantle; and for that reason they must always be considered complementary. At times it is as though the one inherited his intrepid intellect, the other his *nitor animae*. Yet, a profound sermon of Mozley's, entitled 'The Reversal of Human Judgements' (and enshrined in a volume appropriately dedicated to Church), gives utterance to something which the

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pair of them had first learnt from him. Without that leader it fell to Mozley to supply English theology with thought and depth. Church, unoriginal himself for the most part, was quick to appreciate and absorb the gist of the other's ideas. But the Dean knew by instinct when even good argument can be pressed too far and brilliant prose outstrip its purpose. The tribute which he paid publicly to Mozley's work indicates deftly the points at which his own judgement and charity taught him to diverge.* But with the eye of brotherly discernment he cherished James Mozley as a rare soul in whom 'the admiration of greatness' was a sort of passion. And it was Church more than anyone who got Oxford to recognize and use him as a 'teacher of teachers'. The two men kept in close touch for over thirty years. Then, in February 1876, after the seizure which incapacitated the Professor for the last two years of his life, there came a pathetic letter to his old friend at St. Paul's with these concluding words:

I hear rumours of your coming down. I shall be very glad if the promise is fulfilled. . . . I know you have your troubles. May they all issue for the best. As for me, pray for me in my deep weakness.

Ever, my dear Church, yours affectionately,

J.B.M.

My love to your dear wife. Remember me with all the affection of the past to Lord and Lady Blachford.³

That was during the years when Church and Blachford were in disagreement about the policy of the *Guardian*. Yet, here again, the divergence took place within a large and lasting field of very staunch loyalty. Self-reliant as the two men were, they always found themselves united in the end. Over Ritualism the one to give way was not the Dean; but it is difficult to estimate how much he owed to the forceful initiative of the other in some of his most vital decisions. The clear and sensible Lord Blachford with whom he finally aligned himself in criticism of Gladstone's policy was the same decisive Rogers under whose influence he came when the parting from Newman began.

Looking back over a friendship which started in their twenties and lasted fifty years, Church realized that, as a human

* This obituary appreciation, from the *Guardian* of 9 January 1878, is reprinted in the Introduction to Mozley's *Essays Historical and Theological*, Vol. I, pp. xxxix-xlviii.

being no less than as an adherent, he had more in common with Frederic Rogers than with any other of his contemporaries. Their affection for each other was never demonstrative, and indeed seems rather cool compared with the expressed tenderness which passed between some other young men whose religion was mixed up with an Oxford education. But it weathered the vicissitudes of their two very different careers. Travel and politics as well as religious and academic interests drew them together. Quite early on, when they were Fellows at Oriel, their holiday in Brittany strengthened their common feeling of fascination for anything to do with France. They belonged to a circle whose tendency was to neglect and underestimate everything German. Church realized that somewhat guiltily when he told Rogers in 1857 how much the memoirs and letters of Frederic Perthes had impressed him. But to northern Europe generally, as to northern England, he remained almost in every way a stranger.* What his mind and heart chiefly felt was the Mediterranean pull. The Christian faith for him, though morally severe at the core, had had poured upon it a 'beaker full of the warm South'. In his outlook the vistas which it first opened up concerned the historic cultures of Italy, Greece, and the Levant. No one sympathized with that side of Church's nature more than the cultivated Rogers. He himself loved what was colourful and shared that taste for roguery which was evident in his clerical friend when he wrote from Bologna:

I came this morning for the end of a grand *funzione* at San Petronio; the aisles were filled with soldiers under arms, and the nave, an immense place, thronged with people. . . . After the service was over they streamed out most grandly down the steps into the piazza, which was filled with vendors, ambulatory and stationary, of all sorts of things eatable and wearable. But the great attractions were two quacks, one of high, and the other of low degree, who had taken post at each end of the piazza waiting for the exit of the crowd. The gentleman quack was in his carriage, quite a grand turn out, with servants, liveries, and cockades; himself a portly man in black, with a magnificent gold chain across his waistcoat; and around the carriage were arranged trays and drawers, with surgical and dentist

* *Life and Letters*, 148-9. Once, in the autumn of 1880, the Churches did pay 'a pleasant visit to Auckland and Durham' to see Bishop Lightfoot and Dean Lake. (*Letters of William Stubbs*, 199.)

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instruments, and various quack paraphernalia. He stood in his carriage and harangued the crowd. The cad quack was more curious still; he had taken his stand by the grand fountain in the piazza, and was a complete mob orator. He had in his hand a box, which, he said, contained crucifixes, which were a safeguard against all kinds of evils—earthquake, lightning, pestilence, and every sort of danger. These he was going to make present of to his friends, and they could give him, to be sure, something for his trouble in bringing them, but ‘mezzo paola è niente’—for the sake of the crosses—‘e non credete, Signori, che siano di stagno; sono di metallo bianco di Corinte’; and, besides this, he would give with each cross a little packet ‘della radica di S. Apollinare’, which would at once stop toothache; ‘and now, Signorini, I am going to show you the crosses, so take off your hats’: and every hat was off in a moment as he, showed the rows of crosses round. The people looked eagerly—men, women and children. It was curious to watch the buyers as they walked away with their purchase; some looking very grave and putting it safely away—others, half incredulous, and obviously with strong suspicion that they had made fools of themselves. The quack’s impudence and gravity were superb, and so was his Italian, which is unusual.⁴

They were both keen students of politics at home and abroad. The Crimean War they saw chiefly through the eyes of Rogers’s brother who was in the artillery and sent reports from Scutari where he lay in hospital with fever. Upon the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny they felt deep concern about the moral question of wholesale reprisals. What happened when the British got into Delhi brought to mind with new force the savage scenes of the Old Testament, and caused Rogers to discuss seriously with Church ‘how these realities (to use the cant word) seem to drive people back on a Jewish state of mind’. Both in relation to domestic issues and foreign affairs they often display in their correspondence a typical bigness and farsightedness amidst the popular sea of expediency and fuss. Church lacked the Etonian background which gave Rogers access to men at the political centre, nor did he know what life in a Department of State alone can teach. But he, no less than his friend, belonged by upbringing to the England of what may be called the Duke of Wellington period. Privileged to receive their schooling in the days before the Reform Bill, they were inevitable Tories at heart and never quite lost the Tory flavour

of life with its manly poise and good humour towards the world. But because they found themselves as young men caught in a wave of political criticism, theirs was a Toryism which intelligence as well as conscience had riddled with all sorts of Liberal tendencies. They certainly looked with distaste upon the new phenomenon of British imperialism as something tending towards vulgarity if not injustice.⁵

Newman was politically much more naïve. The difference of outlook between him and these two Gladstonian converts can be seen in the correspondence which circulated amongst them in 1878. Blachford received from his old friend at the Oratory on 22 July a letter referring to the outcome of the Turko-Russian situation. Some remarks made by the jubilant Disraeli, when he returned from the Berlin Conference claiming to have secured 'Peace with Honour', apparently appealed to Newman.

As to Disraeli's firework [he told Blachford], I confess I am much dazzled with it, and wish it well. It is a grand idea that of hugging from love the Turk to death, instead of the Russian bear, which, as a poem or romance, finds a weak part in my imagination. And then it opens such a view of England, great in the deeds of their fore-fathers, showing that they are not degenerate sons, but rising with the occasion in fulfilment of the 'Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audientior ito'. And then it is so laughably clever a move, in a grave diplomatic congress—and then it opens up such wonderful views of the future, that I am overcome by it. Nor do I see the hypocrisy you speak of.

Ever yours affectionately,

JOHN H. NEWMAN.

After seeing this, Church wrote to Blachford from Zermatt:

Thank you for Newman's letter. How curious that he should be dazzled, and what a curious bit of English feeling. . . . I should think that N. was almost the unique cross between a true Briton of the proud school of Chatham and Burke, and the enthusiastic, devout, fervid Roman Catholic. . . . It is one of the most characteristic little notes of his that I have seen for a long time.⁶

It is obvious how ready both Church and Blachford were to study the play of mind in their old master whenever they could catch sight of it. Affectionate toleration even for his wrong-headedness marked their relations with him to the very last

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from the time that they got into touch again. How the separation, which began in 1846, came to an end, is told by Church in a letter dated 13 June 1865:

I was in London a couple of days last week at Rogers', and met Newman, who was staying there. He had come for Manning's consecration. It was the first time I had seen him for twenty years nearly. He was very little changed in look or general manner or way of talking, except that he seemed almost stronger in body. He was in good spirits, very hearty, and talked very freely about all sorts of things; reminding us every now and then that he was across the border, but without embarrassment, and without any attempt to flaunt anything in our faces. It was a much more easy meeting than I could have supposed possible. We seemed to fall into the old ways of talking.⁷

From that time it became possible, on occasion, to resume something like the conversation of their Oxford days. The happiness of these contacts between the two Anglicans and the future Cardinal probably owed much to the fact that they fell within a tacitly triangular understanding. It could never be Newman and Rogers or Newman and Church without one of the pairs having reference to the third man. If that sounds like a conundrum it is perhaps one way of stating how a strange psychological problem in three lives was actually solved.

From Newman's point of view the difficulty was to have friends who were not merely admirers or disciples or co-religionists. Deep within him to the end there remained a yearning which some devoted nonentity like Ambrose St. John could not hope to satisfy. Only by slipping off occasionally to St. Paul's Deanery or to Lord Blachford's did he manage to find the mental stimulus and sympathy which he needed. But it took both his old colleagues to set all the harmonies in motion again. The social side of him would probably have preferred Rogers to Church. But because of his downrightness of heart, Rogers never quite conquered a sense of religious antagonism to the creed which the other now professed. The old intimacy with Newman at Oriel had meant a very rich experience for the pair of them. But as it was the nature of one in the process of endearment always to dominate, while the nature of the other was to resist domination, Rogers and he were forced apart. When they met again after twenty years' separation

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Newman records that his old friend 'burst into tears and would not let go my hands'. Yet the intellectual barrier remained. In 1850 the former Vicar of St. Mary's had noted in Rogers a 'deep scepticism'; and in 1865 he still remarked with some irony, 'my surmise is that he thinks me a profoundly sceptical thinker, who, determined on not building on an abyss, have, by mere strength of will, bridged it over'.⁸

Between these two strangely adjusted personalities the sympathetic but self-collected Church acted as the ideal third. Towards Newman he turned a mind capable of appreciating if not of yielding to the last subtleties of pure religious experience. As Tom Mozley wisely observed, the Dean possessed along with high critical powers 'a large stock of that poetry and philosophy which are never seen so well as together'. In the presence of such a congenial nature an Anglican who had become a Roman Catholic for the most abstruse of reasons would never feel that he was being called upon to explain. On the other hand, the certainty that Church could not make a fool of himself, intellectually or emotionally, may have imparted to his personal friendship a somewhat rarefied quality. Rogers needed to be of the party to supply an element of flesh and blood.⁹

Newman apart, Church and Rogers were aptly matched as parson and layman. Lord Blachford (as it is perhaps now best to call him in reference to his completed career) was one of those accomplished administrators whose work and place in public life are inseparable from their character as convinced members of the Church of England. The Colonial Church Bill is his recognized monument in ecclesiastical affairs. But he deserves credit also for the practical policy which he pursued over the appointment of colonial bishops. It is possible that he did as much to fight down Erastianism in the Anglican Communion abroad as Dean Church did in England. Such men as Blachford thrive in clerical company if they can get the right sort, but are not found to take their opinions tamely from the clergy in general. He would have none of the dogma of eternal punishment, and also sat loosely to other theological 'certainties'. He claimed to look at things philosophically from the Aristotelian side; and Church, though himself rather of the Platonist type, felt more than tolerant towards his position. It

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had been Blachford's ambition to write a sort of *apologia*, or *religio laici*, based on the failure of Benthamism as he detected it in John Stuart Mill. But this hope was no more fulfilled than Church's intention to do a *magnum opus* on Gerson and the Conciliar period. The two men, though good journalists and mutual critics of each other's writing, were somehow unable to produce any large or systematic piece of literary work. Temperament may account for this in part, but physical exigencies also need to be remembered. Everything had to be done in the teeth of indifferent health.

Compared with the energies of genius as Newman displayed them, the Dean and Lord Blachford knew their own powers to be the limited ones of much plainer men. That indeed may have thrown them together the more in order to escape the almost incapacitating sense of being overshadowed by his personality. As it was, they fulfilled their vocations at a level where the friendship between them made all the difference.

II. GRATEFUL AGE

The old-fashioned country house at Blachford which Frederic Rogers inherited from his uncle was an eighteenth-century property in the Ivybridge district, not far from Plymouth. Situated amidst lovely scenery on the Yealm, a typical Devon river, the house had a moorland stretch of peat and boulders above it, woods and waterfalls in the vicinity and a prospect of meadows falling away on the other side to the estuary level.

Possession of this pleasant spot gave to the last seventeen years of Lord Blachford's life a character which he enjoyed to the full. When he retired from the Colonial Office with his peerage in 1871 he became the ideal landowner, managing his estates and caring for his tenants in every practical detail. His goodness went to the extent of employing a gamekeeper but letting it be known that he would never prosecute a poacher! On a March morning he could stand enthralled to see flocks of peewits come over from the moors to strut and flap before the house. The spirit of his enjoyment reached St. Paul's Deanery in letters which sometimes followed a dispatch of flowers by the London train. He would tell of his wife's distress over a Guernsey cow in calf, or describe the hedgerows in June—

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writing, he says, with 'the deer almost jumping in at the window to get beans (of which I think a sack must have been consumed in the last week), and a small pug-nosed spaniel with legs a-kimbo, very like (excuse me) Canon —,* barking at them.¹⁰

Church was often invited and got down to Blachford whenever he could. If the holding of a Church Congress at Plymouth was insufficient of an attraction, he was not averse to venturing through rough country to entertain his keen military eye by forming one of a party of observers when army manœuvres were held in that area. A playful invitation from his old friend reached him in February 1875:

I wish you could come here. The foxhounds meet in front of the house on Tuesday week (the 16th) and if you will promise to wear your Dean's hat (I will spare the knee breeches and silks) I will mount you on a little pony that will jump nicely and scramble through the rocks like a cat. They draw up the valley through Combe Wood, so that with good luck and in fair weather it is the prettiest sight possible.¹¹

Nor was the hospitality one-sided. Though residing on his patrimony, Blachford used his retirement still in the public service for some years. He needed to be in London frequently to sit on various Royal Commissions or attend the House of Lords. So there was a standing arrangement for him to have his papers at the Deanery and stay with the Churches whenever he wished. In this way the Dean and he had opportunities to discuss the affairs in which they were so busily immersed. But enjoyment too was a regular feature of these visits both for guest and host. Besides the concerts which he would not miss, Blachford got tickets for *Iolanthe* and the *Merchant of Venice* with Irving and Ellen Terry in the leading parts. He and the Dean, as old travellers with an eye for pictures, were also patrons of Edward Lear, and in May 1880 went round together to an exhibition of his drawings.†

* Could this have been anyone but Scott Holland?

† Church had made a purchase in the previous summer when he was at Mendrisio in Switzerland—as we see from a letter of the artist's to Chichester Fortescue (20 June 1879):

Up here we have had Lord and Lady Aberdeen, pleasant folk, and she singularly nice; but they went yesterday. More to my gain were Dean Church of St. Paul's (Charles M.C.'s brother) with various Moberlys and Coleridges—all

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In conversation with friends, Church could make himself very entertaining. He once surprised a Scottish visitor by starting up from his chair in the library at St. Paul's Deanery and giving a life-like presentation of what the fiery-tempered 'Tait of Balliol' looked like in the old days when he defied the President of the Oxford Union and was fined a guinea. His powers of mimicry were a revelation as he 'went through the pantomime of fiercely bringing a trencher-cap up from behind him, and shaking it in truculent fashion in the face of authority. I never can forget Dean Church trying to look ferocious', but (says this eye-witness) he certainly looked 'astonishingly like unto Archbishop Tait just departed'. The Dean's taste for a comical situation used to be very near the surface and ready to bubble up. But the cares of St. Paul's, especially during the worst phases of the Ritualist controversy, weighed heavily on his buoyancy. The sense of fun was still there, but deep down as in an old well, and it took a familiar friend like Frederic Rogers to draw it up. Indeed, in every way, whether through humour or some congenial pursuit or other, this most excellent of companions refused to let the sparkle die out of Church's life. To Sir Henry Taylor—an old-world literary character and a former colleague at the Colonial Office—he wrote from Blachford on 13 October 1880:

I confess to a share in debauching the Dean. That is to say, I persuaded him to stay here till the last moment at which he was obliged to go to London. My engine of persuasion was a certain marble manufacture, in which I am engaged and of which he is enamoured. Eight or nine years ago I brought home from Rome a few pounds' worth of fragments of various old marbles, and now I have set to work (after giving the matter some study last winter in Italy) in trying what can be made of them, experimentalizing in contrasts and harmonies on a very small scale. Every morning after breakfast the Dean (who of course has great schemes of decoration at St. Paul's floating about him) started off with me to the 'shop', and I believe would have spent the day there fidgeting and watching, to the neglect of all other duties, if I would have let him, and

a 'superior' lot—and the Dean giving me two commissions for 30 guinea drawings of 'Argos' and of this place, did not make his stay less agreeable. We have now only (of English) our San Remo chaplain, Fenton, and his daughter; he is a very good man but narrow, and a contrast to Richard Church as to religious views . . . 'a pursuit of art cannot be reconciled to the religion of Christ!!'

(*Later Letters of Edward Lear*, ed. Lady Strachey (1911).)

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towards the end of September we were approaching a climax (not yet reached), and so he stayed on and on. Engagements are certainly his weak point, so when I have got him I keep him. When he went away he was meditating a visit to Bournemouth, and now he is complaining that London makes him ill. So I expect you will hear or will have heard from him.¹²

For Church, a little after this, there was more interesting material than marble to piece together. His host, indeed, formed a precious part of the pattern as he arranged his Tractarian memories into order for writing. Lord Blachford, he realized, had counted 'for much more than people know in the original development of Newman's mind'. It gave him all the more joy when Talbot was able to meet such a veteran in 1882. 'He has been so much to me', he told the Warden, 'and is so much in himself, that I don't feel that things are complete if my friends, who have come on the scene later, do not know him.' In December the Dean and Blachford went over to Oxford and spent a weekend there. It amazed them to find the old place become quite a 'Great Babylon'—with new buildings, including ladies' colleges, an 80 per cent. increase of students, a whole suburb of villas inhabited by widows, generals, and, retired India officers as well as professors and tutors, and what was a cornfield become a large University Park. At Oriel, going to chapel at half-past five on Sunday and then to dinner in hall, they found themselves 'made much of as patriarchs'.¹³

The next day they were to have gone over to Birmingham to see the Cardinal. But Church declined to face the prospect of snow on the way, so returned direct to London; and Blachford went alone. His reception by Newman at the Oratory, their talk of old times, the Beethoven trio which was put on specially for his pleasure, and the dinner he had in the refectory—all this was doubtless retailed faithfully to the Churches who waited for his return to spend the night as their guest at the Deanery. They must have been eager for news because Blachford reports that, though his train was late on account of the weather and it was midnight when he arrived, he 'sat up talking with them till near one'.¹⁴

Church also retained a personal regard for Mark Pattison, despite the cloud under which he came in religious circles after the loss of his early faith as a Newmanite. It is pleasant to

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know that they sat next each other at the Feast given at Oriel in honour of the outgoing Provost and his successor in 1883. The Grace cup went round after the speeches, and some of the company were up till half-past two next morning. Stubbs, who told Miss Church, that he retired to bed at midnight, having 'got some good fun out of Pattison', says 'I saw no more of the Dean'. Fifteen months later, when a paper recording the death-bed thoughts of the celebrated Rector of Lincoln was sent to Church, he felt that his *Memoirs* were misleading. 'I cling', he said, 'to the belief that Pattison had a better self than appears in the book. I knew him well in old days, and I think that even to the last he thought those days were the best he had known, and sincerely honoured them.'¹⁵

III. LAST YEARS

That kind soul, Asa Gray, regarded St. Paul's Deanery as a sunless and unsuitable place for the Churches and urged the need for frequent holidays. The Dean declined an invitation to visit America and deliver the Lowell Lectures at Cambridge, Massachusetts; but Gray had hoped they would cross the Atlantic and spend the summer and autumn of 1882 as his guests. He was solicitous for the health of the delicate little girls he had seen at Whatley Rectory. In sending on an autograph from Oliver Wendell Holmes 'which I promised H[elen]', he added, 'I wish she, and especially M[ary] could be here now, to enjoy our exquisite dry and stimulating air which, with American oysters, should set her up completely'. Yet Mary alone of the children survived to become her widowed mother's companion and reach old age. The whole family suffered from chest complaints and the Dean, on medical advice, saw to it that they frequently got abroad in summer. In his later years, too, they escaped from London in the raw and chilly season just before or just after Christmas, generally to the south coast. Even so, the lives of Fred, Edith, Helen, and himself hung very precariously from year to year.¹⁶

Their physical disabilities, however, brought mental enlargement as is evident from the letters which Church wrote on his various latter-day travels. After going under the harrow of the Cathedrals Commission and preparing his sermons as select

preacher at Oxford, he got away for another Italian holiday in the spring of 1882, and saw Rome for the first time. His impressions, which he confided to Lord Blachford, were startlingly unlike what might have been expected. The architecture of the city with its juxtaposition of magnificence and squalor, of an anti-religious and an ostensibly-religious world, seems to have induced a Savonarola mood, calling up in the Dean a hatred towards Rome 'such as I never felt to London or Paris'. But a week later, on 2 May, the sunshine had revealed to him the wonder of the place and he took a delight in the various churches with their old columns and pavements:

I walked this morning at seven to S. Agnese in the Via Nomentana. It was deliciously cool and soft, scents from acacias and roses constantly coming in whiffs from the gardens or wayside alleys, and the blue hills rising out of a light mist that hung over the Campagna. And there were the larks and nightingales singing all the way. . . . There were three persons in church, where a mass was going on (I must say very reverently)—myself and two *contadini*. In the midst of it entered two more women with a huge shepherd's dog, which walked about the church with the utmost quietness and gravity, looking into all the corners just as if he was a tourist.¹⁷

Before returning, Church visited his old home in Florence and wrote to tell his brother Charles that their 'Casa Annalena', though very nice, was a storey lower than he had thought. It had apparently reverted, he said, to its original use as a religious house for ladies.¹⁸

Back home again a sense of the blessedness of his lot arose when he thought of the family circle and how they had been spared. In August he sent Talbot a letter from the Deanery, saying: 'We are still here, with the children so happy, that if I were a Greek I should fear Nemesis. They all thank you most heartily for your remembrance of them, but are all astonished that you have not found out *La petite Fadette* before. It is a favourite of old Whatley days with them. I think Mr. Horner gave it them. Freddy is not yet back.' The Dean's son was in Switzerland at the time, hoping to do some climbing. The chambers at 1 Brick Court, where he read as a law pupil under Lord Justice Bowen, were probably not the place for a young man needing long spells of open-air life. Bowen had his doubts whether the law was an ideal profession for Fred. He added—

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what must have pleased his father particularly—‘I never saw *any one* in whom the “star” of home shone so continuously and so brightly’.¹⁹

The Dean visited Florence again the following May and after exploring the Casentino valley sent back to England an account of it enriched by Dante references. Other excursions took him to the sanctuary associated with the visions of St. Romoald at Camaldoli, and to St. Francis’s ‘Chapel of the Birds’ at La Verna. After this tour he informed Copeland on 14 July 1883:

We are just come back from two months’ wanderings among the wonders of the world—Pisa, Florence, Bologna, Ravenna, Venice, Innsbruck, Munich (where we dined with Döllinger),* Nuremburg, Cologne. It was very hot, and we came back rather tired, but we are all right again now.

I saw the Cardinal shortly before we started in April. I thought him looking wonderfully well and bright. He has been up to town since. He seemed to me to have shaken off much of the weakness which had hung about him since he was at Rome.²⁰

It was in the summer of 1883 that Church resumed his regular writing for the *Guardian* after a lapse of nine years. So ended the difference between himself and Blachford over the Ritualist question. D. C. Lathbury has related how he was interviewed by Blachford, as managing proprietor, after being offered the editorship that spring. He innocently remarked that upon ecclesiastical questions he proposed to be guided by the Dean of St. Paul’s. ‘At this’, he writes, ‘Lord Blachford gave a long whistle’; but after a minute or two’s silence said, ‘Very well, then, I suppose we must let that pass.’ He had evidently concluded that the time had come to give way and let the Dean’s policy prevail. This renewed alliance of the two friends as journalists occurred happily about the time of Helen Church’s marriage, and called for further family gatherings. In a letter of this time there is preserved a mellow September vignette of the kind of creative hospitality which Lord Blachford

* After Döllinger’s death Church received from Gladstone a copy of his obituary article on the Catholic scholar whom they, along with Acton, both admired so much. The Dean replied (from 10 East Cliff, Dover): ‘What a place he filled in Christendom, and how great is the emptiness now that he is gone. I hardly know anything in Church history like his position: so inflexible in his faithfulness, and so utterly free from the taint of self-will or self-assertion. It is worth many martyrdoms.’ (Letter to Gladstone, 26 January 1890. *Br. Mus. Gl.*, 44, 127: f. 398.)

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took a delight in providing at his Devonshire abode. He writes, like some benevolent Prospero concealed in the wings:

We have had here the Dean, his daughter Mary, and his married daughter Helen with her husband, F. Paget, son of Sir James, and Rector of Bromsgrove.

The visit is a kind of appendix to their honeymoon. And this has been an occasion for making the father and son-in-law really know one another (for which there is nothing like a country house), taking good long *tête-à-tête* walks, which, as they are sympathetic souls, pleases everybody. He (the Dean) is, I think, getting a little worn out by the air and duties of London.²¹

The old generation were now handing over gracefully to the young. And they in turn had grace to understand. The pious admiration with which Francis Paget came to regard his father-in-law may be seen in the thoughtful preface which he contributed to Mary Church's volume of the Dean's *Life and Letters*. That book, written entirely in accordance with the family tradition of reticence concerning domestic affairs, tells us only one thing of Mary herself—that she was a scholar's daughter, self-effacing, astringent, compressed. Yet a touching incident, recorded elsewhere, does rescue the unmarried girl from oblivion. On 28 March 1883, at the time of her sister's wedding, Cardinal Newman sent a letter to her father to say he had remembered the bride and her husband at Mass that morning; but added, with characteristic love:

Of course it is, however glad an event, a very trying one for all of you, and not least for Mary.

I don't suppose she will find a fiddle make up for Helen, but it has struck me that you and Blachford will let me give the beautiful instrument you and he gave me, to Mary. I don't think she will refuse it; I hear much of her proficiency.

You gave it me in 1865—and I had constant use and pleasure in the use till lately—but I find now I have no command of it; nay, strange to say, I cannot count or keep time. This is a trouble to me; one gets an affection for a fiddle, and I should not like to go without getting it a good master or mistress.²²

They knew themselves now, he and Blachford and Church, to be in the grip of old age. Bad memory, dimness of sight, deafness, and being lame—such infirmities rather than actual illness had overtaken Newman, although he still wrote letters

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and pottered over old books and papers. From Blachford also came word of worsening eye trouble and accumulating signs of senility as he went about the kindly schemes of his estate. In a letter of 26 March 1885 he says:

The Dean I wish were better; he was very ill in the winter, and recovers his strength slowly. I want him to come here, which always does him good. But he has to enthronize his new Bishop and to keep the peace between irreconcilable Canons,* and generally, like other tender-conscienced people, thinks himself more necessary than he is, not recognizing the virtue of ‘wholesome neglect’ (I have often thanked thee, Jew, for teaching me that word). And I am afraid he will not slip cable till he slips off to the South.²³

He was quite right about the South. Italian sunshine never failed to revive Church. He wrote in May from a cleanly inn at Perugia to tell Blachford of the long drive he had enjoyed, despite the heat, to Orvieto. They climbed by road over a mountainous ridge, past villages once walled and fortified, through oak woods enriched with the sound of nightingales and the scent of broom in full golden flower. Then, in the cool interior of the cathedral, he entered a chapel and stood enraptured before the frescoes of Luca Signorelli. Talbot also received a letter from Florence where the Dean, ‘taking things easy, and enjoying blue sky and pleasant airs’, showed himself to have lost none of his old love for the city of his boyhood. Nor had the sense of humour deserted him as he wrote on 4 June:

At Mass this morning there was an old fellow who alternately begged and responded. (*Whisper*), ‘Povero vecchio, caro signore’. (*Aloud*), ‘Et cum spirito tuo’. (*Whisper*), ‘Un po di limosina’ (*Aloud*), ‘Amen’. (*Whisper*), ‘Per carita’. (*Aloud*), ‘Amen’. (*Whisper*), ‘La prego per amor di Dio’. (*Aloud*), ‘Amen’, and so on. They manage to say their prayers and talk at the same time without any inconvenience; you need never fear interrupting them by a question.²⁴

During the next few years the Dean’s pen was not idle, but concerning any other activities only the scantiest of glimpses occur. We find him eagerly calculating the whereabouts of

* The harmony of St. Paul’s Chapter had been most notable. But after Scott Holland’s arrival situations arose which were sometimes a trial to Liddon’s temperament.

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Fred on his voyage out to Greece in April 1886—doubtless recalling as he did so, his own visit to Athens many years before. Then came the flare-up of the Ritualist troubles again, which, as we have already seen, drew from Church a strong letter of warning to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1887. Pleasanter news went from the Deanery in a note to Blachford on 25 June:

The Grays are with us, not a bit tired with all their gay doings at Cambridge and Oxford. This evening Dr. Gray is gone off with my wife and F. to a garden party at Dollis Hill, having a great desire to see the G.O.M., and Mrs. Gray and the girls to the Archbishop's party at Lambeth.

. . . I am rather better, but cannot do anything fatiguing without bringing on breathlessness and distress.²⁵

Very soon the clouds of personal grief began to close in. The early months of 1888 were sad ones for Dean Church. He had taken his family with him to the Riviera, driven to do so by doctor's orders on Fred's account more than his own. But the voyage was in vain. The young man—a classical scholar, already the promising author of *The Trial and Death of Socrates* and translator of Dante's *De Monarchia*—died at Hyères in the middle of January, aged thirty-three. Then, alas, under the shadow of that which stills all controversy it was the Dean's turn to receive from the Archbishop and Mrs. Benson a word of very tender concern. In his reply we feel, despite the controlled language, the weight of a father's sorrow for an only son. 'Nothing that has happened to me in life has been like that moment when we saw that no breath came through his lips.'²⁶

While they were abroad suffering thus, news came of the death of Asa Gray at Cambridge in America. So ended a thirty-five years' friendship, scenes from which the Dean now vividly recalled—the first 'chance acquaintance in Oxford . . . mornings at Zermatt, or lying on the turf at the Riffel among the flowers; visits at Whatley and Mells, with Mr. Horner with us; visits at Blachford, and bright conversations between him and Lord Blachford; the arrival of books, or extracts, from journals, or essays on Darwin, or scientific biographies . . .' Something very fine had gone out of life, but Church recounted it with no emotion except gratitude.²⁷

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Indeed, returning to England in April, he shook off all outward melancholy and wrote cheerfully to Blachford about people and things in France. He looked forward to meeting him in town. But the days of that friendship were also numbered. In a year's time a slow, fatal illness overtook Lord Blachford. Church, bearing a kind inquiry from Gladstone, went down in September to see him. What was said between them we are not permitted to know. But the last sad letter dated from the Deanery, 25 September 1889, is the nearest thing to a personal confession that Church ever wrote:

My dear Blachford—Thank you very much for writing to me. There are things and times for which there are no words; as when you spoke to me at Blachford about our friendship, and thanked me. What could I say when I remembered the immense difference between your debt and mine, and what life and everything would have been to me without all that you have done for me and been to me—more than I can understand, though it is seldom out of my mind.

It is a thing to be beyond anything thankful for to have had such blessings, and for so long. May God help me to accept the change, and use it as it ought to be used. The thought of what is to take the place of things here is with me all day long since Fred's departure; but it is with a strange mixture of reality and unreality, and I wish it did me all the good it ought. Books are not satisfactory—at least I have always found it so. It seems to me that there is nothing equal to letting the Psalms fall on one's ears, till at last a verse seems to start into meaning, which it is sure to do in the end. And the Collects are inexhaustible.

Ever yours affectionately,

R. W. CHURCH.²⁸

Blachford died in November and, as if to anticipate the next inevitable severance, the Dean about that time received a letter from his daughter Mary telling him of her visit to Newman at Birmingham. To have seen the Cardinal, as she described him in his beautiful and serene old age, was (her father replied) an experience to treasure: 'It may prove to be the last intimate talk that any of us have had with him.' Newman lingered however till the following August. A month after that they were burying Liddon too—the Dean officiating for the last time in public to utter the words of committal at the grave.²⁹

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Church's own departure was not far off. He faced the prospect as he bore the parting of friend after friend. He showed not so much that numbness of feeling which nature often lends to old age, as a sort of resigned objectivity.* Unable because of bronchitis to attend Newman's funeral, he had written two articles about him for the *Guardian*. These, though not without the authoritative marks of personal knowledge and admiration, seem almost to have been composed in the detached manner which a writer might use in making an assessment of some distant historical figure. Yet, when Talbot ventured to remark in him a likeness to Newman in spiritual quality, Church replied saying that it made him 'feel such a fool to be spoken of in the same breath with him'.³⁰

Self-deception and the comfort of human praise were never allowed to occupy much place in Church's thoughts. Shortly before his death, as if with a premonition of those flattering things which friends were to say of him when he was gone, he sent Francis Paget this strange confession:

I often have a kind of waking dream; up one road, the image of a man decked and adorned as if for a triumph, carried up by rejoicing and exulting friends, who praise his goodness and achievements; and, on the other road, turned back to back to it, there is the very man himself, in sordid and squalid apparel, surrounded not by friends but by ministers of justice, and going on, while his friends are exulting, to his certain and perhaps awful judgment. That vision rises when I hear, not just and conscientious endeavours to make out a man's character, but when I hear the loose things that are said—often in kindness and love—of those beyond the grave.³¹

No doubt it was under the compulsion of that Dantean rebuke that he had already directed that no public memorial should be raised to his own name at St. Paul's. He had also arranged for a simple burial beside the chancel outside the village church at Whatley, and commanded a stone to be placed over his remains bearing these words from the *Dies Irae*:

* Going through his more valued books he picked out Dr. Routh's edition of the *Gorgias* and *Euthydemus*, interleaved with notes collected by Routh at the beginning of the century. The old President of Magdalen had given the volume to James Mozley, from whom (said the Dean) 'it came to me; and now before it is too late, I wish that it should be where it ought to be, in the library of Magdalen College'. So he wrote on 19 May 1890 and arranged for his son-in-law to return it. (R. D. Middleton: *Dr. Routh* (1938), 109.)

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Rex tremendae majestatis
Qui salvandos salvas gratis
Salva me, fons pietatis.

Quaerens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti crucem passus,
Tantus labor non sit cassus.

So for him who had put every penitential arrangement earnestly in hand, there drew on the day when Londoners heard the great bell of St. Paul's ominously tolling. Another Dean—more perhaps like Colet than Donne—had made shift to find ‘how little a way a soule hath to goe to heaven, when it departs from the body’. After an early celebration of Holy Communion in the north-west chapel of the Cathedral, where his coffin stood in the midst, there was a funeral service with its long procession and solemn music. Thence they carried him to be laid in the earth of a snow-covered churchyard. The winter had arrived from which this time he was not to escape; and the Christian in him had no desire to escape.³²

But Richard Church was also a humanist to the end. Till the night came when no man may work he continued at his proof-sheets and other scholarly tasks. Then, gathering a few favourite books about him—Homer, Lucretius, Dante, Worsdworth, and Matthew Arnold—he left the November fogs of London for the last time and fled to Dover. He had ever been drawn to places from which a ship might sail. And there, early in the morning of 9 December 1890, very quietly (to use Blachford’s words) he slipped cable, and, as one belonging to another country, was ‘off to the South’.

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AND NOTES

REFERENCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

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Cited by abbreviations in SMALL CAPITALS.

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- BR. MUS. GL. British Museum, Additional MSS. The Gladstone Papers, 44,107; 44,127; 44,244; 44,339; 44,340; 44,519; 44,785; 44,787.
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* So spelt always by Church, as also 'civilise', 'realise', 'connection', 'mediaeval', 'artizan', 'judgment.' But the liberty has been taken, for the sake of uniformity, to substitute 'civilize', 'connexion', 'medieval', 'artisan', &c., when quoting. In places, too, I have ventured to make some slight alteration of Church's punctuation, especially when he uses the dash and comma together.—B.A.S.

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Chapter One: FAMILY MATTERS

I. MEDITERRANEAN CHILDHOOD

¹ MS. letter and press cutting in possession of Col. C. J. B. Church. Cf. Church, *L.L.*, 2.

² *Occ. Papers*, II, 327 ff.

³ BR. MUS. CH., II, 36,544 (1-22). Church, *Sir R. Church*, 268-9, 307.

⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 5. Church, *Sir R. Church*, 287-304.

⁵ Church, *L.L.*, 3.

⁶ Moberly, 40.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

II. AT BRISTOL AND BATH

⁸ Church, *L.L.*, 326; 8-9.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

¹⁰ Moberly, 46-47.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹² *Ibid.*, 290.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 48.

Chapter Two: OXFORD AND NEWMAN

I. ACADEMICAL LIFE

¹ Church, *L.L.*, 12, 13.

² *Ibid.*, 13.

³ *Oxf. Mov.*, 74, 77.

⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 20-21.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁶ Prothero, I, 219. Church, *L.L.*, 24.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 23; 99; 35.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 47 ff.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

II. THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

¹² *Oxf. Mov.*, 139-41.

¹³ Church, *L.L.*, 333.

III. GROWTH OF NEWMANISM

¹⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 14.

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- ¹⁵ Ollard, 51.
¹⁶ *Oxf. Mov.*, 113. Church, *L.L.*, 14. Cf. *Occ. Papers*, II, 441 ff.
¹⁷ Church, *L.L.*, 17. *Oxf. Mov.*, 162.
¹⁸ Church, *L.L.*, 334; 17.
¹⁹ *Oxf. Mov.*, 49–50.
²⁰ Ward, II, 513.
²¹ *Oxf. Mov.*, 26–27.
²² Blachford, 55.
²³ *Occ. Papers*, II, 481. *Oxf. Mov.*, 162.
²⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 25.
²⁵ *Ibid.*, 26–27.

IV. THE AUTHORITIES IN OPPOSITION

- ²⁶ *Oxf. Mov.*, 214.
²⁷ Church, *L.L.*, 29–31.
²⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.
²⁹ *Ibid.*, 25 n. Newman, *Apol.*, 254, 256. *Oxf. Mov.*, 163.
³⁰ Church, *L.L.*, 42.

V. TRAGIC COLLAPSE

- ³¹ C. S. Emden, *Oriel Papers* (Oxford, 1948), 172–3.
³² *Oxf. Mov.*, 268–9.
³³ *Ibid.*, 316.
³⁴ Newman, *Apol.*, 245. *Oxf. Mov.*, 238. Cf. Newman, *Apol.*,
260–1.
³⁵ Blachford, 55–56; 111.
³⁶ Faber, 436–7. Mozley, *Lett.*, 146.
³⁷ Pattison, 184–207.
³⁸ Church, *L.L.*, 45–46.
³⁹ Pattison, 185–6; 207.
⁴⁰ Church, *L.L.*, 54–55. BR. MUS. GL., 44, 107 (232).
⁴¹ Mozley, *Lett.*, 165. Cf. Prothero, 341.
⁴² Church, *L.L.*, 57.
⁴³ *Ibid.*, 25 n.
⁴⁴ Newman, *Apol.*, 323. Ward, I, 85. Church, *L.L.*, 59.
⁴⁵ Ward, I, 113; II, 571. Cf. Maisie Ward, *Young Mr. Newman* (Sheed and Ward, 1948), 453–4. Pattison, 213.
⁴⁶ Ward, I, 95, 108, 111.

VI. FORWARD WITHOUT NEWMAN

- ⁴⁷ Church, *L.L.*, 321–2.
⁴⁸ *Oxf. Mov.*, 344, 347.
⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 164.
⁵⁰ Lake, 52.
⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 308. Church, *L.L.*, 345.

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I. TRACTARIAN JOURNALISM

¹ Mozley, *Lett.*, 71.

² Church, *L.L.*, 320. Mozley, *Lett.*, 146.

II. 'ST. ANSELM'

³ Church, *L.L.*, 39.

⁴ *Ess. & Rev.*, 141.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 156, 153, 186, 214, 215.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 116, 118.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 121, 131.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 189–90.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 191–2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹² *Ibid.*, 221.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 223–4.

III. FAITH AND THE MEDIEVAL

¹⁴ Froude, *O.C.R.*, 316.

¹⁵ *Wulstan*, 43, 46.

¹⁶ *Ess. & Rev.*, 249–50.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 265; 235–6.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 235; 271–2.

IV. FOUNDING THE 'GUARDIAN'

¹⁹ Froude, *Rem.*, I, 258–9.

²⁰ Blachford, 119.

²¹ *Occ. Papers*, I, 26–27; 15–16; 34, 35.

²² *Ibid.*, I, vii.

²³ Mozley, *Lett.*, 178–9.

²⁴ Gray, II, 379.

V. 1847: MEDITERRANEAN TOUR

²⁵ Church, *L.L.*, 65–74.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 79–80.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 95, 97–98.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 100–1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 113–14.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 119.

³¹ Faber, 320–1.

VI. POLITICAL LESSONS FROM ABROAD

³² Morley, I, 334–5.

³³ Church, *L.L.*, 80–81.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 86–87.

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³⁵ Mozley, *Lett.*, 182: 192.

³⁶ *Ess. & Rev.*, 346.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 293–5.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 391.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 399; 397.

⁴⁰ Church, *L.L.*, 134.

VII. 'DANTE'

⁴¹ *Ess. & Rev.*, 76.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 56–57.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5–6.

Chapter Four: CHURCH AND STATE

I. 1850: THE GORHAM CASE

¹ Lathbury, *Gl.*, I, 104.

² *Ibid.*, I, 333.

³ *Ibid.*, I, 355.

⁴ *Oxf. Mov.*, 343.

⁵ *Ch. & State*, 8; 51–52.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 37–52. Cf. T. M. Parker: *The English Reformation* (O.U.P., 1950), 79–80.

⁷ *Ch. & State*, 6–7; 57–58.

⁸ Lathbury, *Gl.*, I, 114–15.

⁹ Mozley, *Lett.*, 211.

II. 1851: AFFAIRS OF ITALY

¹⁰ Church, *L.L.*, 131–2.

¹¹ *Ess. & Rev.*, 408–9.

¹² Morley, I, 391; 402.

¹³ *Ess. & Rev.*, 439–42.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 479.

¹⁵ *Ch. & State*, 56.

III. FUTURE IMPERFECT

¹⁶ Church, *L.L.*, 134.

Chapter Five: THE WHATLEY YEARS, 1853–71

I. THE NEW RECTOR

¹ Church, *L.L.*, 143.

² Lake, 184.

³ Church, *L.L.*, 138.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 143; 153.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 176.

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⁶ Church, *L.L.*, 150–2.

⁷ Ibid., 160–1.

⁸ Ibid., 188.

II. CULTURE AND AGRICULTURE

⁹ Church, *L.L.*, 145–6.

¹⁰ Lord Irwin: *John Keble* (Mowbray, new edn. 1932), 193. *Vill. Ser.*, I, 114.

¹¹ *Hum. Life*, 149–50.

¹² Mozley, *Lett.*, 304. Church, *L.L.*, 150.

¹³ H. Coombs and A. N. Bax: *Journal of a Somerset Rector* (Murray, 1930), 142, etc. Cf. Virginia Woolf: *The Second Common Reader* (Pelican edn., 1944), 76 ff.

¹⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 141.

¹⁵ Ibid., 181; 139–41.

¹⁶ Gray, II, 429–30; 610.

¹⁷ Church, *L.L.*, 176–7; 183–4.

III. SCIENCE AND LIBERALISM

¹⁸ Gray, II, 523–5. Church, *L.L.*, 155.

¹⁹ Gray, II, 396; 574.

²⁰ Ibid., II, 464; 478–80; 498; 591; 594; 646–7; 693; 750–1. Church, *L.L.*, 154; cf. 157.

²¹ Church, *L.L.*, 328.

²² Ibid., 156–7. Cf. Gray, II, 464.

²³ Church, *L.L.*, 17. *Occ. Papers*, II, 313, 324. Mozley, *Lett.*, 222. Church, *L.L.*, 269.

²⁴ Ibid., 199.

²⁵ Ibid., 145.

²⁶ Ibid., 168–9.

²⁷ Mozley, *Lett.*, 249. *Occ. Papers*, II, 103; 93.

²⁸ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (126–7). Cf. Lake, 210, 230.

IV. TRACTARIAN OR TRIMMER?

²⁹ *Occ. Papers*, II, 269.

³⁰ BR. MUS. GL., 44,107 (273–85). *Occ. Papers*, II, 133; 179.

³¹ Church, *L.L.*, 144. Mozley, *Lett.*, 217. BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (129).

³² Church, *L.L.*, 172–3.

³³ Ibid., 189–90.

³⁴ Ibid., 182.

³⁵ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (131–2).

V. PAINFUL UPROOTING

³⁶ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (133–40).

³⁷ LIDDON MSS. (for dates given).

³⁸ *Vill. Ser.*, I, 310 ff.

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Chapter Six: At St. PAUL's, 1871-90

I. LONDON ON THE CONSCIENCE

¹ *The Golden Guide to London* (Sampson Low, 1875), 5, etc.

² Prestige, *St. P.*, 111-12. LIDDON MSS.

II. 'NOT AS OTHER DEANS'

³ Church, *L.L.*, 200.

⁴ PUSEY MSS., Liddon to Pusey, I; Pusey to Liddon, II (August and December 1871).

⁵ Church, *L.L.*, 215-16. Prestige, *St. P.*, 113; 124.

⁶ Church, *L.L.*, 235.

⁷ *Annual Register for 1872* (new series), 10-11. Church, *L.L.*, 236.

BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (142-4).

⁸ Church, *L.L.*, 236-7.

⁹ Prestige, *St. P.*, 144-5. Blachford, 342.

¹⁰ Church, *L.L.*, 201-3.

¹¹ Ward, II, 383.

¹² Church, *L.L.*, 238. BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (147); 44,107 (310).

¹³ BR. MUS. GL., 44,339 (23).

¹⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 324-5.

¹⁵ Ward, II, 385-6. MacColl, 284-5.

¹⁶ Church, *L.L.*, 316.

¹⁷ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (186); (190-2)

III. ISSUES OF THE DAY

¹⁸ Gray, II, 598.

¹⁹ Church, *L.L.*, 265; 278-9.

²⁰ Ibid., 262; 325-6.

²¹ Ibid., 342-4.

²² Ibid., 301.

²³ Ibid., 275-6.

²⁴ Ibid., 337-8.

²⁵ Ibid., 341-2.

²⁶ Prestige, *St. P.*, 184-5; 211-13.

Chapter Seven: THE KITICAL BATTLE

I. CEREMONIAL LAW AND LIBERTY

¹ Ollard, 188-9.

² *Occ. Papers*, II, 37.

³ Church, *L.L.*, 168-9.

⁴ *Occ. Papers*, II, 62. BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (138-40).

II. CHURCH MILITANT

⁵ E. M. Goulburn: *John William Burgon* (1892), II, 194.

⁶ Church, *L.L.*, 243; 242.

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⁷ Lathbury, *Ch.*, 166 ff.

⁸ Church, *L.L.*, 246.

⁹ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (159) [19 January 1875].

¹⁰ Church, *L.L.*, 247.

¹¹ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (169-74).

¹² Ibid. (175-6).

III. ARCHBISHOP VERSUS DEAN

¹³ Church, *L.L.*, 244.

¹⁴ Ibid., 255, 256.

¹⁵ Ibid., 258-61.

¹⁶ Ibid., 281 ff.

¹⁷ Davidson, 424-5. Church, *L.L.*, 287.

¹⁸ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (196-200).

¹⁹ Ibid. (207).

²⁰ Lathbury, *Ch.*, 144-8.

IV. HISTORIANS AND LAWYERS: WILLIAM STUBBS

²¹ Eccl. C., 345-6; 348; 353.

²² Stubbs, 233; 252; 211.

²³ Church, *L.L.*, 312.

²⁴ Stubbs, 209; 211.

²⁵ Church, *L.L.*, 283-4.

²⁶ Ibid., 254.

²⁷ Stubbs, 212; 220. Blachford, 421.

V. CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

²⁸ Eccl. C., 353.

²⁹ Church, *L.L.*, 252-3. *Ess. & Rev.*, 222.

³⁰ *Occ. Papers*, II, 71.

³¹ Church, *L.L.*, 254. *The Times*, 18 July 1874.

³² Church, *L.L.*, 241.

VI. ARCHBISHOP BENSON

³³ Church, *L.L.*, 257.

³⁴ Ibid., 324.

³⁵ Stubbs, 322.

³⁶ Ibid., 316; 319-20.

³⁷ Church, *L.L.*, 349. Cf. E. S. Roscoe: *The Bishop of Lincoln's Case* (Clowes, 1891), 101-70.

Chapter Eight: THE GLADSTONE PARTNERSHIP

I. PATRONAGE AND PARTY

¹ Morley, II, 432-3. Drew, 323-4; 356. Lathbury, *Gl.*, II, 79.

² BR. MUS. GL., 44,339 (115), 15 September 1869. Ibid., 44,107 (299 f.).

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³ Ibid., 44,339 (144), (146).

⁴ Ibid., 44,339 (160). 44,127 (219). 44,339 (168; 170).

⁵ Ibid., 44,127 (320-1), (326; 333 ff.), (354-5).

II. 'CONFIDENTIAL'

⁶ Church, *L.L.*, 272-3.

⁷ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (314-18), (329).

⁸ Ibid. (344-5), (379).

⁹ Ibid. (240 f.).

¹⁰ Ibid. (265-75).

¹¹ Blachford, 417. Church, *L.L.*, 307.

¹² BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (227 f.).

¹³ Ibid. (318), (368-72).

¹⁴ Acton, 143; cf. 152. BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (369 ff.).

¹⁵ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (373-8).

¹⁶ Ibid. (283-4).

III. MAKING THE ESTABLISHMENT ACCEPTABLE

¹⁷ Drew, 299; 350. BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (178).

¹⁸ Morley, II, 177; 431. BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (149-56); cf. Morley, I, 163. Lathbury, *Gl.*, II, 335.

¹⁹ Cf. Gray, II, 544; 603 ff., etc. Lathbury, *Gl.*, II, 335.

IV. ANOTHER LOST LEADER

²⁰ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (164-6); 44,107 (344-5; 361 ff.).

²¹ Spenser, 53; 69; 174; 61.

²² Church, *L.L.*, 279.

²³ Ibid., 292.

²⁴ Ibid., 298; 299-300.

²⁵ MacColl, 332 f.

²⁶ Church, *L.L.*, 320-1.

V. RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

²⁷ BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (184-5).

²⁸ Church, *L.L.*, 292-3.

²⁹ MacColl, 83.

³⁰ G. Stephenson: *Edward Stuart Talbot* (S.P.C.K., 1936), 14-15.
Church, *L.L.*, 227-8.

Chapter Nine: CHURCH'S MIND AND WRITINGS

I. VIA CRITICA

¹ Cf. Algernon Cecil: *Six Oxford Thinkers* (Murray, 1909), 127 ff.

II. THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

² Pascal, 112-13.

³ Oxf. Mov., 168-9.

⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 293. *Occ. Papers*, I, 232.

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⁵ *Disc. Char.*, 129–33.

⁶ *Oxf. Mov.*, 168. C. C. J. Webb: *A Century of Anglican Theology* (Blackwell, 1923), 34–39. Cf. B. H. G. Wormald: *Clarendon* (C.U.P., 1951), 256.

⁷ *Mess. Peace*, 78–81.

⁸ *Cath. Ser.*, 4. *Vill. Ser.*, II, 27. *Mess. Peace*, 90.

III. CIVILIZATION

⁹ *Vill. Ser.*, I, 193. *Cath. Ser.*, 81. *Pascal*, 192. *Mess. Peace*, 43.

¹⁰ *Vill. Ser.*, I, 220. *Pascal*, 162–3. *Occ. Papers*, I, 112–13. *Pascal*, 222.

¹¹ *Pascal*, 152. *Vill. Ser.*, I, 39.

¹² *Disc. Char.*, 101. *Gifts. Civ.*, 9; 11.

¹³ *Gifts. Civ.*, 34–35.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 38–39.

¹⁵ *Vill. Ser.*, I, 107.

IV. THE MEASURE OF HUMANISM

¹⁶ *Spenser*, 164–5.

¹⁷ *Pascal*, 80.

¹⁸ *Hooker*, xvi–xvii.

¹⁹ *Spenser*, 158–9.

²⁰ Gray, II, 743; 748–9. *Bacon*, 203.

²¹ Drew, 326. *Spenser*, 119.

²² *Bacon*, 2.

²³ *Misc. Ess.*, 83–84.

²⁴ *Cath. Ser.*, 61.

V. THE JUDGEMENT OF HISTORY

²⁵ *Pascal*, 58–59. *Occ. Papers*, I, 223. *Gifts. Civ.*, 163; cf. 180.

²⁶ *Misc. Ess.*, 429–32.

VI. ANGLICANISM: A NEW PHENOMENON

²⁷ *Occ. Papers*, I, 393–4.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 157.

²⁹ *Pascal*, 65–69.

VII. TO AWAIT VINDICATION

³⁰ *Oxf. Mov.*, 215.

³¹ Church, *L.L.*, 321. BR. MUS. GL., 44,127 (403).

³² Church, *L.L.*, 259. *Pascal*, 158. *Oxf. Mov.*, 346–7.

³³ *Pascal*, 93. Church, *L.L.*, 225.

³⁴ Acton, 184. Church, *L.L.*, 275. *Dante & Ess.*, 255–6. *Cath. Ser.*, 244–52.

³⁵ *Cath. Ser.*, 268–9. Cf. Lathbury, *Ch.*, 148–9. *Oxf. Mov.* (Introduction), vi. (Cf. Controversy with Prof. G. T. Stokes in the *Guardian*, 7 September 1887 and following issues.)

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³⁶ *Pascal*, 308–9.

³⁷ Church, *L.L.*, 191–8.

VIII. THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT: BISHOP BUTLER

³⁸ Lathbury, *Gl.*, I, 407.

³⁹ *Pascal*, 255 ff.; 30.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 169–70.

IX. INFALLIBILITY

⁴² *Cath. Ser.*, 278.

⁴³ *Occ. Papers.*, II, 389–91.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 393.

X. IN THE FACE OF THE ABYSS

⁴⁵ *Pascal*, 243.

⁴⁶ *Occ. Papers*, II, 241–2; 188–9.

⁴⁷ *Pascal*, 248–9.

⁴⁸ *Vill. Ser.*, II, 105–7.

⁴⁹ *Cath. Ser.*, 158–61; 224–5; cf. 202. *Pascal*, 242.

⁵⁰ *Disc. Char.*, 120.

⁵¹ *Cath. Ser.*, 307–8.

⁵² *Vill. Ser.*, I, 163–4.

⁵³ *Pascal*, 14–15.

XI. NO ‘SHIPWRECKED MARINER’

⁵⁴ Newman, *Apol.*, 121. I am permitted to add this comment from Canon A. E. Baker, an authority on Butler and a disciple of John Oman: ‘“Probability is the guide of life”—but Oman says that probability dominated by the absolute authority of conscience is for all practical purposes what we mean by faith. Butler’s approach to faith, indeed, expects not merely docility or credulity . . . but a man’s whole personality and sincerity. And for these it offers him moral certainty; you must live by the light you have. Revelation is not intended to remove mysteries.’

⁵⁵ *Cath. Ser.*, 199–201.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 284–5.

⁵⁷ Church, *L.L.*, 67.

Chapter Ten: THE PERSONAL THREAD

I. FRIENDSHIPS: LORD BLACHFORD

¹ Church, *L.L.*, 346–7.

² Moberly, 153.

³ Mozley, *Lett.*, 346.

⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 130–1.

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⁵ Blachford, 168.

⁶ Church, *L.L.*, 269–70.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁸ Ward, I, 611; 627; II, 90. Cf. Newman, *Apol.*, 291.

⁹ Mozley, *Rem.*, II, 8.

II. GRATEFUL AGE

¹⁰ Blachford, 372.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 361.

¹² The note about Church's mimicry of Tait is found amongst some loose sheets of a pamphlet by Dr. A. K. H. Boyd in the possession of Col. C. J. B. Church. Blachford, 400–1.

¹³ Church, *L.L.*, 306. Blachford, 415–16.

¹⁴ Blachford, 417.

¹⁵ Stubbs, 233. BR. MUS. GL., 44, 127 (388).

III. LAST YEARS

¹⁶ Gray, II, 725; cf. 737.

¹⁷ Church, *L.L.*, 297.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 299.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 300; 330 n.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 312.

²¹ Lathbury, *Ch.*, 149–150 n. Blachford, 420.

²² Ward, II, 520–1.

²³ Blachford, 429–30.

²⁴ Church, *L.L.*, 318–19; 320.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 325.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 330.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 331–2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 339.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 340–1; 344–7.

³⁰ *Occ. Papers*, II, 470–82.

³¹ Church, *L.L.*, Preface xxiv.

³² *Ibid.*, 349–50.

Notes on the Illustrations

frontispiece

DEAN CHURCH, c. 1874

From a portrait engraving subscribed for by his former parishioners at Whatley in 1874, and now hanging in the vestry of Whatley church. (*Reproduced by courtesy of the Revd. A. F. Dobbie-Bateman.*)

page 1

CASA ANNALENA, FLORENCE

A palace of the Napoleonic period, said to have been for a time the residence of Caroline Bonaparte, Murat's widow, the former Queen of Naples. In the grounds was the site of a convent founded in the fifteenth century by the unhappy Annalena, a lady of the Malatesta family.

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ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD

The front quadrangle, showing the bay window of the Chapel in the south-east corner, with the tower of Merton behind. The windows of Church's rooms are seen to the right of the Chapel on the ground floor. Newman's were immediately above.

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WHATLEY RECTORY

Asa Gray the American botanist, when he came over to England from Harvard with his wife in 1869, reports how they made 'a little round of visits, first to the Darwins', near Bromley, then to the Churches' in Somersetshire, a pleasant country rectory and a delightful couple'.

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ST. PAUL'S DEANERY

'I have not the least notion', wrote Church in October 1871, 'how far I can bear the huge change from the country, with its fresh air and simple ways of life, to the gloomy atmosphere (and the Deanery is like a prison, shut up between high walls), and big dinners, and late hours of London.'

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ORIEL COLLEGE LIBRARY

'In such things as favourite books, which one knows by look and feel, and which bear the marks of our converse with them in disfiguring pencil marks and notes, it is really quite painful', said

NOTES ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Church, ‘to think into whose indifferent and unworthy hands they may have to come.’ Happily a few hundred carefully selected volumes of the Dean’s went to Oriel.

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WHATLEY CHURCH

In the churchyard, close to the chancel wall on the south side, can be seen the low tombstone which marks the place where the Dean was buried on 16 December 1890. His wife was laid to rest in the same grave on 15 May 1905.

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